National Restaurant Association Vol. [illegible] No. 2 ☐ February 198[illegible]

Alaska
AR200-1A

NRA NEWS

Dietary Schizophrenia

NRA MEETINGS

Seminars

Basic Foodservice Courses

Basic Supervision in Foodservice
3/10 Shreveport, LA
4/22 Denver, CO

Dining Room Management
3/5 Springfield, MA
3/10 Grand Rapids, MI
3/11 Kansas City, MO
4/14 Buffalo, NY
4/15 Syracuse, NY

Kitchen Management
3/3 Boston, MA
3/10 Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
3/11 Calgary, Alberta, Canada
4/7 Portland, ME
4/22 Denver, CO
4/24 Annapolis, MD

People-Power and Profits
3/27 Fort Worth, TX
4/9 Columbus, OH

Tools for Training
3/4 Boston, MA
4/7 Newark, NJ
4/8 Atlanta, GA

Food Production Courses

Perfecting Your Culinary Skills
4/8 Richmond, VA

Simplified Baking Workshop
3/11 Baltimore, MD
4/29 Atlanta, GA

Soups and Sauces
3/3 Boston, MA
3/4 Philadelphia, PA
4/7 Minneapolis, MN
4/8 Indianapolis, IN
4/21 Denver, CO

Foodservice Management Courses

Banquet Management
4/3 Portland, OR
4/5 Seattle, WA
4/14 Boston, MA

Beverage Management
3/3–4 Boston, MA

Business Dynamics for Women in Foodservice
4/21 Denver, CO

Introduction to Computers in Foodservice
3/3 Providence, RI
3/10 Newark, NJ

Applications for Computers in Foodservice
4/28 Newark, NJ

Employee Motivation
3/4 Williamsburg, VA
3/6 Gatlinburg, TN

1986 Study Group Meetings

Foodservice Security Council
1/20–22 Chicago, IL

Safety Officers
1/22–24 Chicago, IL

Large Independent Operators
2/14–16 Orlando, FL

Labor Relations
2/25–26 Memphis, TN

Financial Officers
4/2–5 Lake Tahoe, NV

Tax Executives
4/2–5 Lake Tahoe, NV

Market Research
4/9–11 Atlanta, GA

Management Information Systems (formery the EDP Group)
4/29-5/2 Lake of the Ozarks, MO

Internal Audit
5/6–9 Hilton Head, SC

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
5/14–16 Chicago, IL

Marketing Executives
5/14–17 Chicago, IL

MAECO
5/14–16 Chicago, IL

Quality Assurance
May (to be determined)

For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec, (312) 853-2525.

Food Cost Management
3/5 Williamsburg, VA
3/21 Salt Lake City, UT
4/22 Portland, OR

Foodservice Operators' Legal Workshop
3/2 Washington, DC
3/5 San Francisco, CA
3/21 Denver, CO

Menu Development
3/24 Tucson, AZ
4/22 Albany, NY

Negotiating for, and Financing, Foodservice Facilities
3/26–27 Fort Worth, TX

Off-Premises Catering
3/24–25 Vienna, VA
4/14–15 Austin, TX

Operational Analysis
3/25–26 Minneapolis, MN
4/21–22 Charlotte, NC

Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy
3/26–27 Portland, OR
4/21–22 Denver, CO
4/30–5/1 Miami, FL

Planning Successful Buffets
3/4 Boston, MA
3/10 Portland, OR
3/11 Seattle, WA
3/27 Rochester, NY

Real Estate & Restaurant Site Selection
4/7–8 Louisville, KY

Restaurant Design and Facilities Planning
3/24–25 San Diego, CA
4/28–29 St. Paul, MN

Wine and the Bottom Line
4/9 Washington, DC
4/15 Chicago, IL

National Conferences

INFO 86: Independent Foodservice Operators' National Conference
2/16–19 Orlando, FL

National Conference on Computers in Foodservice
3/16–19 Washington, DC

For more information, contact NRA Education Programs 311 First Street, NW Washington, DC 20001 (800) 424-5156 or (202) 638-6100

NRA NEWS

Vol. 6 No. 2 February 1986

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Ted Balestreri
Co-owner
The Sardine Factory, Inc.
Monterey, California

Your NRA Board of Directors met in January to review and implement association activities. The scope of association projects is as broad as the industry is diverse. From legislative representation and educational forums to special-issue projects and promotions, the information, guidance and support NRA now offers its members is truly unprecedented.

The priority issue on the Board of Directors' agenda is to ensure the tax simplification plan, now being reviewed by the Senate Finance Committee, does not include provisions to reduce the deductibility of the business meal.

Tax reform hearings before the Senate Finance Committee began January 24. NRA urges all members to contact their senators to explain the tremendous negative effects any decrease in the deductibility would have on the industry as well as on state and local economies.

In an effort to take the industry's message directly to President Reagan and members of the Senate Finance Committee, NRA sent each of them a video tape in which NRA Vice President Jim Hasslocher, Treasurer Michael Grisanti, board member John Farquharson and I explain the destructive effects meal deduction limitations would have.

Other NRA Washington activities include an effort to effect changes in the Department of Labor's (DOL) "exempt manager" rules. During a recent DOL call-for-comment period, NRA submitted suggested changes that need to be made in current DOL rules. Because many foodservice managers do not presently qualify as managers under the current narrow rules, NRA is requesting that DOL redefine the exempt status as it affects the foodservice industry. We will keep you informed.

NRA's *National Symposium: The Crisis in Product & Service Liability* held in conjunction with Pennsylvania State University took place in Washington, January 29. More than 100 representatives from affected industries, including insurance, health care, manufacturers, restaurants as well as city and county governments gathered to discuss the effects of promiscuous litigation on our nation.

One restaurateur speaking at the symposium, summed up the crisis by explaining, "One customer gets rich quick through a windfall court decision, and the rest of the public pays the price." Look for coverage of the symposium in the March issue of ***NRA NEWS.***

The White House has asked that the National Restaurant Association encourage NRA members to participate in the White House Small Business Conference scheduled for August 1986.

The last White House Small Business Conference took place in 1980, and more than 60 restaurateurs participated in setting an agenda for America's small busi-

ness operators. National delegates to the conference are selected during state conferences. For more information on participation in the conference at the state level, see the article in *Washington Report*, this issue.

Contributions to the NRA political action committee (NRA-PAC) doubled in 1985 over 1984, reaching $110,000. Contribution funds are donated to the campaigns of congressmen and senators who support the goals of the foodservice industry.

The latest of NRA's 1986 *Current Issues Reports* should be in your mailbox this month. *Foodservice and the Labor Shortage* looks at the age of the workforce and the competition for workers over the next five years. If you do not receive your copy soon, contact NRA's research department.

By now you should have finalized your plans to attend NRA's Independent Foodservice Operators' National Conference, INFO 86, in Orlando, FL, February 16–19. Hundreds of independent foodservice operators will come together to discuss trends, innovations and problems as they relate to the independent's business environment. The theme of this year's program is "Take advantage of your independence." I hope to see all you independent operators there.

NRA's National Conference on Computers in Foodservice will follow one month later in Washington, DC, March 16–19. Many computer vendors will be on hand to demonstrate their latest equipment. For more information, contact NRA's education programs department or see the back cover of this issue.

It is not too early to plan promotions for the 1986 prom/graduation season. To help you, NRA has sent all members *Operation: Prom/Graduation*, a program designed to promote your operation while encouraging graduating students not to drink and drive. Through a task force of local businesspersons, you will have an opportunity to help keep the prom season a safe season. NRA's communications department can supply you with more information.

Be sure to enter your menus in the NRA Great Menu Contest before the end of the month. Entry deadline is February 29. NRA's Great Menu Contest fosters excellence in menu development and design. Winners become a standard of excellence for the entire industry.

The annual ***NRA NEWS*** *Index of Articles* is contained in this issue. It is a tremendous reference source which includes all the articles published in the ***NRA NEWS*** during 1985. There is also an index available for each year ***NRA NEWS*** has been published. It goes back to October 1981.

During January, 152 foodservice operators and allied suppliers joined us as members of NRA. Welcome. Your participation in NRA will make your business grow and make your association more effective in its endeavors on your behalf.

Sincerely,

Ted Balestreri
President and Chairman of the Board

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Cover Story: Dietary Schizophrenia

Are Americans confused about their eating habits—opting for salads and other low-calorie entrees and then heading for the most caloric desserts? Maybe not. Although dubbed "dietary schizophrenia," this growing trend may not be as contradictory as it appears. Enjoying high-calorie desserts may be a result, not a reversal, of the nutrition/fitness movement. Nutrition may have become so commonplace in the lives of health-conscious Americans that they can guiltlessly splurge on an occasional extravagant dessert.

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12 No longer considered a passing nutritional trend, salad bars are alive, well and branching out.

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Cover photograph by Gary Landsman

SHORT ORDERS

Enrollment period now in progress for NRA insurance plan

As the cost of individual major medical insurance continues to rise, more NRA members are taking a look at the officially sponsored, low cost NRA Group Major Medical Insurance Plan.

Now, during a special enrollment period scheduled through April 1, 1986, members and key employees under age 65 are eligible to apply for this comprehensive insurance. Coverage may also be included for spouses and unmarried, dependent children up to 19 years of age (23 if a full-time student).

Applicants choose their own deductible—$300, $500 or $1,000. This choice allows members to decide how much they can afford to pay on their own before the insurance takes over. Of course, the higher the deductible selected, the lower the final premium. Once the deductible is met, the plan pays 80 percent of covered expenses. After the insured has paid $1,000 in covered, out-of-pocket expenses (plus the deductible), the NRA plan pays 100 percent for the rest of the year—up to $1,000,000.

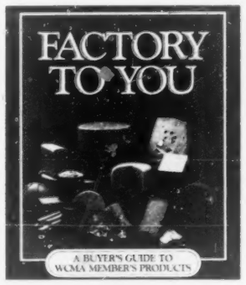
The plan pays for many hospital and medical expenses including hospital room and board, surgery, specialized equipment, prescription drugs, anesthesia, professional ambulance, convalescent care and much more.

NRA members will be receiving information on this plan in early March. Further details can be received by contacting the insurance administrator: Albert H. Wohlers & Co., NRA Group Insurance Plans, 1500 Higgins Road, Park Ridge, IL 60068-5750. Toll-free number: (800) 323-2106. Illinois residents: (312)681-2221.

Cheese association prepares product guide

The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association is preparing a buying guide to member products called "Factory to You." The guide will be available free of charge to all cheese and gourmet shops, grocers, brokers, restaurants and distributors in the United States.

The 1986 edition of the guide will list more than 200 varieties and styles of cheese produced and marketed by 150 manufacturers and wholesalers. The buyer can find the cheese of interest in the table of contents, go to the listing for that cheese and cross reference with the member listing for the name, address and phone number of the sales contact.



To order this directory, contact the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, P.O. Box 2133, Madison, WI, 53701 or call (608) 255-2027.

NRA member wins award

NRA member William Saigh, owner of Lettuce Leaf, Inc. in Clayton, MO, was awarded the 1985 award from the Missouri Rehabilitation Councelors Association (MCRA) in recognition of his company's consistent practice of employing persons with handicapped conditions.

"These persons are excellent employees and hiring them for many years now has had a profound effect upon our managers," says Saigh. "Our managers have taken it upon themselves to be able to communicate more efficiently."

Restaurant Insights on video

Restaurant Insights is a new bimonthly video news program that lets top industry executives see into the kitchens, dining rooms and offices of operations from coast to coast. Every segment of the industry is tracked for story ideas. On-the-scene photography and on-camera interviews and reports let viewers see and hear about changing concepts, trends and promotions.

The video program, which runs 35 to 40 minutes, is produced by Retail Insights, Inc., producers of *Supermarket Insights* and *Convenience Store Insights*. It is free to qualified foodservice operators on an as-available-basis. The first program of 1986 is scheduled for this month and comes in all formats—VHS, Beta and ¾ inch cassettes.

To subscribe, contact Retail Insights, 100 Prospect St., Century Plaza North, Stamford, CT 06901.

Because you asked

A number of readers have wondered about the art used in the opening spread of last month's restaurant sign article. The picture is, in fact, an over-exposed line shot with a re-screened halftone of the "Empire Diner," a 30" by 48" oil on canvas by John Baeder. Baeder, who specializes in nostalgic architecture and has written a book called *DINERS*, illustrating the charm of the American diner, lives in Nashville, TN. Many of his works can be seen at the O.K. Harris Works of Art gallery in New York City.

WASHINGTON REPORT

The fight on caps continues

The industry has another opportunity to eliminate caps on the business meal when the Senate Finance Committee begins to write its version of tax reform legislation. Markup could begin as early as this month. That is why NRA is urging all members to contact their senators now.

Of most concern is the House-approved provision to trim by 20 percent the deduction for business meals, including those eaten away from home, and any business entertainment that includes food, such as receptions, banquets or catered events. NRA is working to keep the proposal out of the Senate version.

You can do your part by asking your senators why our industry is only 80 percent legitimate. Why is it given second-class status when other forms of business promotion—advertising, direct mail, product samples, office furnishings, etc.—are considered legitimate business expenses?

Tell your senators that an NRA-sponsored study by Chase Econometrics shows that an 80-percent deduction jeopardizes the jobs of nearly 400,000 foodservice workers. Over a three-year period it will lead to a $1 billion loss of tax revenue at the state and local level because of lost sales and income tax receipts and increased spending for unemployment compensation and welfare.

Ask your employees to contact their senators as well. Also, please send a copy of your correspondence to the NRA Government Relations Department in Washington.

NRA fought hard last year to have limitations on the business meal deduction removed from the House tax bill as it was marked up in the Ways and Means Committee. The industry nearly won full deductibility when an amendment by U.S. Rep. Wyche Fowler (D-GA) to keep the business meal deduction at 100 percent was narrowly defeated by a vote of 19–17.

Rep. Bill Frenzel (R-MN), left, co-sponsor of the amendment to preserve full deductibility of business meal expenses, and NRA President Ted Balestreri answer questions concerning business meal deduction legislation at a recent Board meeting.

NRA pushing for TJTC revival

The failure of Congress late last year to extend expiring tax credits leaves the fate of the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) up in the air. Technically, TTJC expired on Dec. 31, 1985. But NRA hopes the expiration is temporary and is working now with other employer groups to have the credit retroactively extended to Jan. 1, 1986.

The TJTC expiration does not affect employees who have already been certified for the credit. Employers may still take a first-year credit of up to $3,000 and a second-year credit of up to $1,500.

Although no new employees can be certified for TJTC, the Department of Labor (DOL) has instructed state jobs services offices to process TJTC certification requests received prior to January 1, 1986.

The state offices have also been instructed to receive and keep on file any certification requests received after January 1 so that if the credit is retroactively extended, they can be processed.

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL) has made some assurances that a bill will be taken up early this year to restore many of the credits left in limbo because of Congress' inaction last year.

Failure to act on a budget reconciliation measure in December killed nine other tax credits as well, including the research and development credit and credits for employer-provided educational assistance, prepaid legal services, vanpooling and the removal of architectural barriers.

These credits would have been extended temporarily through Aug. 1, 1986 under an NRA-supported plan accepted in December by the House and Senate tax-writing committees. A temporary extension was favored by the committees because it would give them enough time to finish work on a tax reform bill, which may modify or even eliminate some of the credits. But this temporary measure was held up in a bitter dispute over financing and budget reconciliation.

NRA is asking its members to contact their representatives and senators to urge them to support immediate retroactive extension of TJTC. During 1985, 623,000 disadvantaged individuals were hired because of TJTC. These employment opportunities will end if the credit's expiration becomes permanent.

Fast food labeling rejected

Mandatory ingredient labeling of fast foods was rejected by the Department of Agriculture (USDA) in December. In response to a petition by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), USDA supported NRA's long-held position that restaurant foods should not be subject to labeling.

Fast foods are not adequately standardized to permit ingredient labeling, according to USDA. Mandatory ingredient labeling would require "an incredibly large, complex inventory of wrappers and containers, and would entail a very large burden on each restaurant affected," noted USDA.

The costs of mandatory labeling would outweigh any public benefit, USDA said. "We do not find the public health issues you raise nor the legal distinction you propose for fast food restaurants sufficiently compelling to alter our earlier position," said USDA Assistant Secretary Raymond Lett.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) must also respond to the CSPI petition. According to FDA, the CSPI petition is not high on its priority list, so a response is not expected until later this year.

Farm bill signed

President Reagan signed an omnibus farm bill on Dec. 23, 1985. This five-year re-authorization measure begins the move toward a more market-oriented federal farm policy by cutting federal price supports to reduce the government's role in agriculture.

While the bill appeases farm policy reformers by lowering price supports, it also appeases the farm community by protecting the farming income.

The bill comes with a $52 billion price tag for commodity programs—$2 billion more than the President wanted. The total cost for all farm programs over the five-year life of the bill could exceed $160 billion, which includes $69 billion for food stamps.

The new law freezes target prices for two years and allows the prices to fall in later years.

An NRA-supported effort to lower dairy price supports was successful. The compromise bill will allow dairy price support levels to drop after an initial one-year freeze at the current support level of $11.60 per hundredweight.

The dairy price support will drop to $11.10 by October 1987.

States elect delegates to second small business conference

More than 1,800 small business people from across the country will meet in Washington Aug. 17–21 for the second White House Conference on Small Business.

The first conference was held in 1980 and resulted in 60 recommendations to the President and Congress on small business issues. Nearly two-thirds of those recommendations have been implemented.

The purpose of the second conference is to review the status of the 1980 recommendations, increase public awareness of the contributions of small business, identify the problems facing small business and develop recommendations for government action.

Each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico will have held its own small business meeting prior to the national conference.

NRA members were active in the first conference, and NRA is encouraging all restaurateurs to get involved in 1986.

Although many of the states have already met, nearly half of them will hold their conferences in the upcoming months. See the accompanying box.

If you are interested in attending your state conference, write the White House Conference on Small Business, 1801 K Street, N.W., Suite 1101, Washington, DC 20006 or call (202) 653-9550.

A number of delegates will also be appointed by the President, Congress and state governors. For information on these appointments, contact your governor or congressman.

—Jay Morris
—Michele Rabayda

Schedule of state small business meetings

Date	Location	Delegates to be elected	Delegates to be appointed
Feb. 19	Jackson, MS	14	8
Feb. 21	New Orleans, LA	20	11
Feb. 25	Louisville, KY	18	10
Feb. 28	Nashville, TN	22	12
Mar. 7	Washington, DC	10	2
Mar. 11	Cherry Hill, NJ	32	17
Mar. 18	Houston, TX	58	30
Mar. 21	Dallas, TX	*	*
Mar. 25	Albuquerque, NM	10	6
Apr. 1	Indianapolis, IN	24	13
Apr. 8	St. Louis, MO	22	12
Apr. 11	Des Moines, IA	16	9
Apr. 15	Wichita, KS	14	8
Apr. 18	Little Rock, AR	12	7
Apr. 22	Oklahoma City, OK	16	9
Apr. 25	Las Vegas, NV	10	5
May 1	Phoenix, AZ	14	8
May 6	Billings, MT	10	5
May 9	Portland, OR	14	8
May 13	Boise, ID	10	5
May 16	Anchorage, AK	10	4
May 22	Syracuse, NY	72*	37*

**In states holding two conferences—California, Texas, New York, Illinois, and Florida— each conference will elect half the total allotted delegates. The state totals for elected and appointed delegates are listed under the first state entry.*

Total elected/appointed state delegates	1,723
Delegates appointed by the President	100
Total delegates to the National Conference	1,823

Interview

Courtemanche discusses small business conference

Jack L. Courtemanche *is executive director of the White House Conference on Small Business, which will convene in Washington, August 17–21. Courtemanche brings the insight of 27 years of business experience to his new job. Prior to his appointment, Courtemanche was deputy assistant to the President for public liaison and executive director of the White House Conference on Productivity.*

NRA NEWS: **Tell us briefly what this second White House Conference on Small Business hopes to accomplish.**

Courtemanche: We have created a forum in every state for small business people to present policy recommendations to the federal government. Those recommendations will be taken up at the national conference in Washington, and final recommendations will be presented to the President and Congress.

Participants at the state conferences also will elect delegates to the national conference. The delegates will meet for four days to prioritize all the recommendations from the state conferences and come up with a final list for the President and Congress.

Delegates to the first conference in 1980 drafted 60 recommendations, and 38 of those have been acted on legislatively or administratively.

Q: Will there be 60 recommendations again?

A: Not necessarily. There is no pre-determined cutoff. When we get to the national conference, there will be about 2,200 recommendations from the states. There will be a number of duplications, of course, but the delegates will have the job of going through these and coming up with a manageable number.

Q: You have reached the midpoint on these state conferences. How has the response been?

A: We have been very pleased. The response has been very, very good. Business people don't have as many problems as they did in 1980—interest rates are down, and the business climate is much better. So this time I think the participants are looking into the future, thinking about where they want to be in five years and what it will take to get there.

Q: What have been some of the major issues raised at the state conferences?

A: Some of the top recommendations have been in the area of simplifying the tax code. There is a feeling that we need a simpler and more stable tax system so a small business person can anticipate tax changes and, then, to have it remain in place for five or six years.

There also have been recommendations for allowing tax-free transfer of a small business within a family, permitting private sector alternatives to Social Security and continuing the investment tax credit.

There also is strong support for a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget and/or restricted spending and for giving the President authority to line-item veto the budget.

Q: A major problem for restaurateurs lately has been obtaining liability insurance. Has that come up in your state meetings?

A: Yes, that has been one of the top worries. In fact, I'd say it is the biggest concern small business has today. Some of our top recommendations have come out of the areas of insurance and product liability. We have heard terrible horror stories about people paying six, seven, eight, nine times what they were paying 12 months ago, and in many cases they aren't even able to get insurance, no matter what the premium is.

There have been some recommendations for tort reform, such as putting caps on liability suits. Unfortunately, much of what must be done to get at this problem must occur at the state level. The insurance issue is primarily a state one.

Q: What becomes of the final recommendations once they are presented to the President and Congress? Is there an agency, such as the Small Business Administration, designated to work toward their implementation?

A: No, there isn't. As in 1980, we are relying on the delegates themselves to be the advocates. We believe Congress and the administration will look and listen to these recommendations because they are coming from such a strong group.

Q: Will the members of Congress be appointing delegates to the White House Conference as they did last time?

A: Yes, that is correct. The President will appoint 100 delegates, and each senator, representative and state governor will appoint one delegate. About 40 percent of all delegates will be appointed by elected officials.

Q: So a restaurateur who has missed his state conference and still would like to come to Washington as a delegate has another chance. How would he pursue such an appointment?

A: He should just contact his local congressional office and express a desire to be a delegate to the White House Conference on Small Business.

Q: You have talked to hundreds of small business people in the last several months. What does the future hold for them?

A: The future and outlook for small business is extremely good. More people are starting small businesses than ever before. In the last three years the number of start-ups has broken the previous year's record. We have such a good climate in the U.S. for small business compared to other countries; there just is no other place in the world where you have the opportunity like you do here in America. Small business people are tough, and they are survivors. They persevere. I feel very positive about their future.

Dietary Schizophrenia

Is America really counting calories?

In uptown eateries and downtown steakhouses, fitness enthusiasts who once shunned dessert in favor of another round of aerobics are making a beeline to the dessert bar. This selective indulgence is no accident. It makes sense, nutritionists say, and may be the answer to the dietary schizophrenic trend that has been puzzling restaurateurs. As this article points out, dessert is not the last battleground for fitness lovers; it is here to stay. by Marcia Hibsch Coppess

Recently two women completed a strenuous hour of aerobics at a popular and crowded fitness center in Chicago, IL. As they undressed for the return to work, they discussed their weekend plans. "I have a ton of work to finish before I go home tonight, and I may have to work this weekend," the noontime exerciser told her friend. "But my first stop is the specialty store down the street. Their chocolate truffles are my Friday afternoon treat for surviving another week of aerobics."

Who are these diners who espouse nutrition and fitness while guiltlessly finishing off their last bite of sour cream pecan pie? According to dietitians and food industry observers, they are *selective indulgers:* diners for whom good nutrition is not just a passing trend but a way of life.

Selective indulgers are of no particular age group or economic stratum. They do not cause a blip in the consumption data collected by industry researchers, but they have made nutrition a priority in their lives.

In the late 1970s, when doctors began warning patients of rising blood sugar and blood pressure levels, many consumers viewed sugar and salt as poisons. Piously, they sacrificed their salt shakers and desserts and headed for the gym. But as they became accustomed to the wok on the stove and the salt off the table, they lost their self-consciousness about eating. Now if the evening is festive and the company is pleasant, when the dessert cart rolls around, they happily choose the gooiest item on the shelf and sleep well that night, knowing that one dessert will not be their downfall.

Marcia Hibsch Coppess is a freelance writer who specializes in psychology and nutrition.

Other changes in habits may be contributing to the trend toward selective indulgence. With alcohol awareness on the rise, operators are seeing a higher demand for non-alcoholic ice cream drinks and other desserts as customers focus on desserts rather than liquor as a preferred item on the menu.

"This movement may actually reflect a healthier attitude toward eating," says Robyn DeBell, a registered dietitian who emphasizes preventive medicine in her private practice in Tucson, AZ, and an American Dietetics Association ambassador. "Often, diners classify some foods as good and others as bad. That's wrong. No single dessert ever killed a normally healthy person.

"People who observe healthful eating habits most of the time but occasionally splurge on dessert realize that it's not dessert that is fattening—it's one's overall approach to nutrition," DeBell continues. "So, rather than feeling guilty every time they have dessert, or permanently depriving themselves of it, they take good care of their bodies throughout the month by exercising and maintaining good nutrition. Then when they splurge on an excessively high-calorie dessert, they don't feel guilty about it." Ann Clurman, senior vice president of Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc., New York, NY, adds that consumers are placing more emphasis on the sensuality and aesthetics of eating and are willing to compensate for an occasional splurge.

And what does this portend for the restaurant operator? Until recently, a typical American dinner—at home or in a restaurant—consisted of a large portion of meat, a starch and an accompanying vegetable or salad for color and balance on the plate. That was often followed by a serving of ice cream, pudding or perhaps a slice of pie.

"While today's dinner may still contain protein, consumers prefer it as chicken in a stir-fry mixture, thin slices of London broil or a Crab Louis salad," DeBell says. "Greater attention is paid to flavorful vegetables, fruits and starches."

The result—a diet lower in fats, cholesterol and calories. And, apparently, when that habit is maintained regularly, both at home and while dining out, consumers feel comfortable with periodically treating themselves to rich desserts even if those desserts contain as many or more calories as their typical dinners.

Quality is key . . .

DeBell has noted another twist to selective indulgence: Quality, not quantity, is the trend. Even "bad" foods have to be the best. When consumers eat a rich dessert, they want the ingredients to be of the same high quality as the other foods they consume.

"For many of us, dessert represents a reward," DeBell says. "Conscious diners shun 'plastic' desserts," the dietitian continues. "Instead of artificial creamer, whipped topping and gelatin-based sweets, they want to indulge in real buttercream, real almond paste, pure whipping cream and natural vanilla. They would rather eat one perfect strawberry dipped in imported chocolate than a whipped-topping confection or a milkshake from a machine."

Others have noted the increase in America's sweet tooth as well. Reg Schmidt, vice president of business development for MRCA Menu Census, reports that national dessert consumption, in a slump for more than 10 years, leveled out last year. Candy consumption is at record levels, adds the U.S. Department of Census. Researchers estimate that in 1985 the average American ate 20 pounds of candy—more than half of it chocolate, and that in 1986 the figure will rise to 21 pounds—the highest it has been in 40 years.

Meanwhile, light entrees emphasizing more vegetables, pastas in light sauce and broiled or baked rather than fried meats continue to gain popularity.

Support for selective indulgence . . .

Thus, nutritionists point out, even if they spoil themselves with pastries and creamy desserts, selective indulgers are still ahead of traditional American diners who think that if they cut down on nightly desserts they are doing their part to stay fit.

If you add up the calories, it appears that selective indulgence in extremely rich desserts can be less fattening than reduced consumption of ordinary desserts. Consider, for instance, a person who has decided to cut down on "fattening" desserts. If, instead of a nightly bowl of ice cream or slice of cake, he eats a cup of tapioca pudding twice a week, he will have consumed 2,400 calories in desserts during one month.

Compare that to someone who indulges in a rich prepared dessert twice a month (about 1,100 calories at 550 per serving). The restaurant diner ends the month having consumed half the calories of the conservative at-home diner—with room for whipped cream and a cherry atop each serving. And if the selectively indulgent diner has been exercising and watching his fat and cholesterol intake during the rest of the month, the difference could add up easily to 3,500 calories a month—equivalent to 12 pounds a year.

"... dessert in a restaurant is far safer than one at home because the portions are controlled."

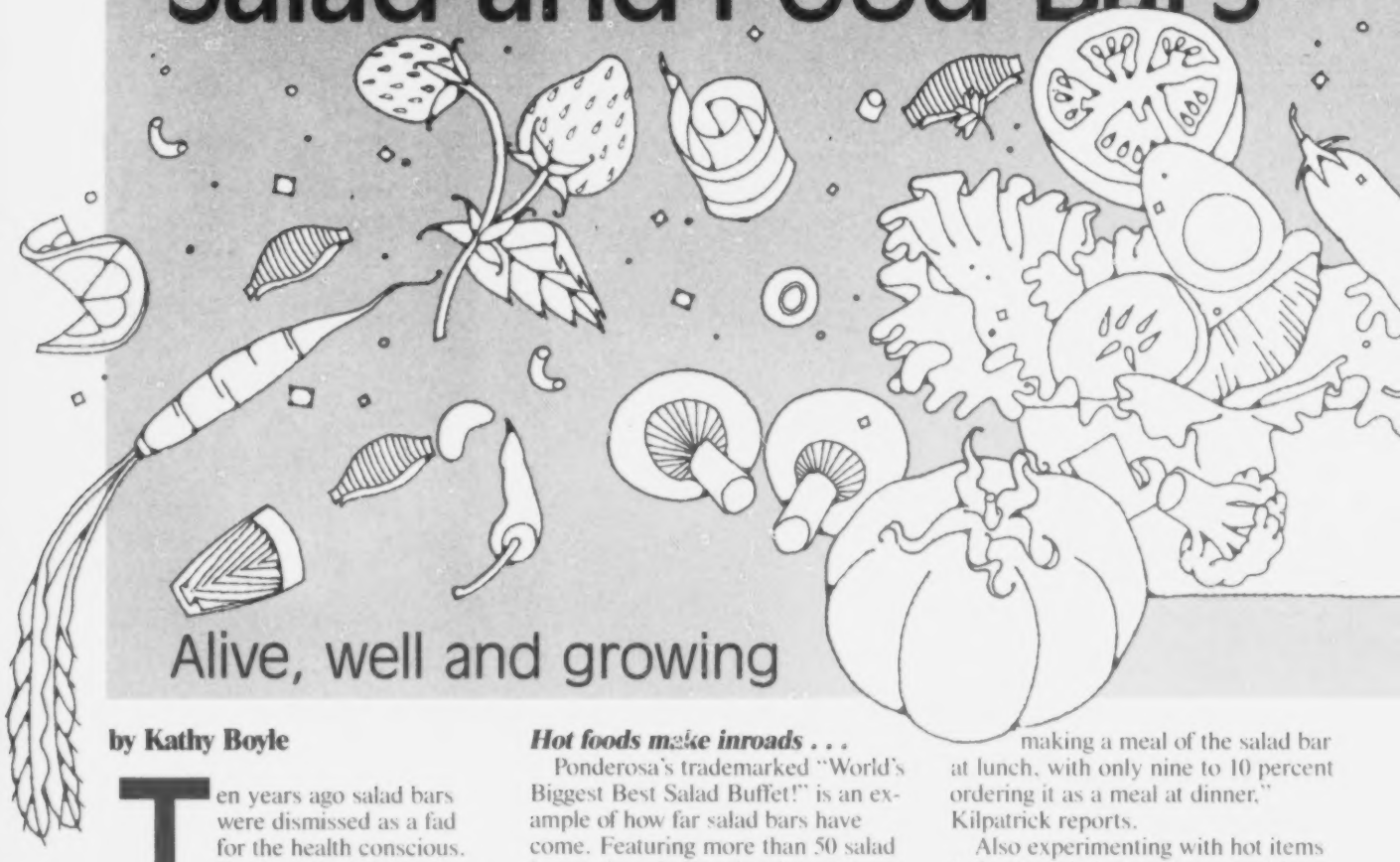
Barbara Stover, R.D., a consultant in Washington, DC, supports the new selective indulgence. "I would prefer that my weight-control clients indulge periodically while eating in a restaurant rather than doing it regularly at home," she says.

"For a restrained eater (someone who must continually restrain himself from the urge to overindulge), dessert in a restaurant is far safer than one at home because the portions are controlled," Stover explains. "One portion of a rich dessert in a cafe will almost always be far less than the slice of cake you'll cut at home. And there's no guarantee that you'll stop with one piece if you take the whole cake home."

DeBell agrees. "I'd rather that a person eat a rich chocolate truffle occasionally than a bowl of ice cream every few evenings. In addition to lowering their fat and cholesterol intakes, the change would be a good move toward better nutritional habits."

Some things never change: everyone loves dessert. But a new dimension has shifted its status. Now the richest, gooiest, creamiest treats have support from the most unlikely advocate, the sophisticated health-conscious diner. So dust off the dessert cart and polish up your pastry skills. Dessert is back in style! ❑

Salad and Food Bars



Alive, well and growing

by Kathy Boyle

Ten years ago salad bars were dismissed as a fad for the health conscious. Today, especially during lunch, salad bars are thriving. According to 1984 Gallup poll figures, more than 30 percent of restaurants offer a salad bar. And if fast food chains are added to the tally, the number is even higher.

The salad bar is not likely to disappear. When Gallup recently asked customers if they preferred their salad served at the salad bar or at the table, an overwhelming 65 percent preferred the salad bar. And respondents in the 18 to 24 age group were the most enthusiastic, with 76 percent preferring a salad bar.

The salad bar has become such a standard in the restaurant business, in fact, that a number of variations are catching on. There are breakfast bars; appetizer bars; dessert, ice cream and chocolate bars as well as a wide selection of hot foods attached to the traditional salad bar, such as soups, casseroles, etc.

Kathy Boyle is a free-lance writer in the Washington, DC, area who writes frequently on foodservice topics for ***NRA NEWS.***

Hot foods make inroads . . .

Ponderosa's trademarked "World's Biggest Best Salad Buffet!" is an example of how far salad bars have come. Featuring more than 50 salad items, the salad bar has brought new life to the Dayton, OH, company's steakhouse image in 26 states, Canadian provinces, England and Puerto Rico. In addition to cold salad items and toppings, Ponderosa's new "Hot Spot" adjunct features rice pilaf, baked macaroni and cheese, hot pastas, stewed tomatoes and other hot vegetable dishes plus three daily soups.

The Hot Spot is adjacent to the salad bar, but it is a separate hot foods section. It operates from 11 a.m. until closing at most units. Ponderosa changed equipment to add this new section, which like the salad bar, is included in the meal. According to George H. Kilpatrick, vice president of marketing, concept and product development for Ponderosa, "the Hot Spot does require a little extra labor as there is more maintenance of hot foods. But we have made changes on the cold side to essentially keep the same food cost so we did not have to charge extra."

Ponderosa calculates that the incidence of use of the Hot Spot closely follows the salad bar. "We estimate that 25 percent of our customers are making a meal of the salad bar at lunch, with only nine to 10 percent ordering it as a meal at dinner," Kilpatrick reports.

Also experimenting with hot items is the Rax chain, headquartered in Columbus, OH. Currently, all 160 company stores, except for four or five that are too small to accommodate the larger U-shaped salad bar units, are offering a hot nacho section on the end of each salad bar. There are between 15 to 18 items available to make nachos, including chili sauces (no meat), taco sauces, green chili sauce, Spanish rice, refried beans and hot cheese.

According to Ann E. Bennet, member of the Rax research and development team, this is the first time a hot item has been used systemwide. In the past there were regional favorites, such as chicken wings and hot German potato salad. "Usually we like to use the end-cap units of our U-shaped bars for seasonal items," says Bennet. "Fresh fruits are played up in these sections in the summer, but since the wells can take either hot or cold foods, Rax is currently using the end unit for a nacho bar."

Wider variety of items . . .

Expanding the number of items or adding more unusual items continues to be a trend. "At first people were

Tomorrow's customers are growing up with salad bars. Today's younger generation takes the presence of the salad bar as a given. From elementary school through college, schools are finding that the cost of serving students is less at a salad bar because of decreased food and labor costs.

intrigued with the idea of the salad bar itself," explains Bruce Reinstein, vice president of Delb Restaurant Management headquartered in Newton, MA. The company operates Souper Salad Restaurants and four Souper Salad Express operations in the Boston area. "We started with a rather simple offering of salad bar items," he says. "Today we have more items and more unusual items. We have every kind of pasta salad, with both tomato and spinach pasta. We even create our own marinated broccoli salad, which includes onions, tomatoes and fresh herbs."

To create variety and encourage repeat business, the selection changes daily. And no two stores have the same mix of offerings.

"When we started," explains Reinstein, "we had the same salad section at each location. But we found that customers at our suburban locations like potato salad and other hearty offerings while at our Harvard Square location at Harvard University, customers want a variety of sprouts. Customers even want the carrots cut differently," he adds. "At some locations they want strips while at other places they prefer slices. You really have to monitor what they use."

At La Grande Salade Saloon (175 seats) and Cafe la Grande, owned by the Mangan family of Philadelphia, PA, salad bars are the centerpiece. Six years ago when the Mangans remodeled their old restaurant and renamed it La Grande Salade Saloon, they built a mirrored, walk-through corridor to display a 30-foot salad bar, which offers between 80 to 100 items daily. The unusual selection can include cold rice salads, fresh fish and anchovies, Waldorf Salad with peanuts, red cabbage with sesame seeds, chili, scallops, calamari, lox, herring, shrimp, whitefish, clams on the half-shell and almost any kind of fruit plus a wide selection of desserts. There are daily specials as well. On Friday, nachos and pizza are offered.

The 220-seat Cafe la Grande, which opened last August, builds on the success of La Grande Salade Saloon but in a more relaxed country French setting. At Cafe la Grande the salad bar area is called "The Food Show." The Food Show includes most of what is offered at La Grande Salade Saloon, but it also features a hot food entree every lunchtime. "We estimate 65 to 75 percent of our customers make The Food Show an entree at lunch," says Marianna Mangan, general manager. That is why The Food Show is not included in the price of an entree, although customers ordering off the menu do get a discount. The Food Show is $9.95 a la carte for lunch or $5.50 with an entree. At dinner the price drops to $2.95 or $3.95, depending on the entree ordered.

To maintain such salad bars, the Mangans built separate salad kitchens at both locations. "We have a refilling room, separate from the kitchen, so we don't get in anyone's way," explains Mangan. "And we keep two

salad runners busy all the time."

Not every restaurant can, or would want to, maintain such an extensive salad bar on a daily basis. But some, like the Main Officers' Club at Fort Lewis, WA, do manage to pull out all the stops once a year. "Once a year we offer our 88-foot World's Longest Salad Bar, which includes 200 salads," boasts Irene Coate, club manager. "It is anticipated all year long, and it is very popular with our members." The lavish, one-day salad spectacular draws attention to the club's daily salad bar which is offered throughout the year but only offers 32 different items.

Recycling equipment at breakfast . . .

Several operators have increased use of their salad bar equipment by recycling it for a breakfast bar during the morning hours. Others, like Roy Rogers, the fast food division of the Marriott Corporation, use the concept on weekends only.

Ponderosa offers a breakfast bar at about one-third of its units, getting double duty of its salad bar equipment, especially the warmers. The offerings include scrambled eggs with a wide array of toppings as well as waffles; frozen, fresh and canned fruit; pastries, such as croissants, and bacon and sausage. "We reached a high point with the breakfast program last spring," explains George H. Kilpatrick. "We have less units in the program now, but some have opted to offer the breakfast on weekends only or with a shorter list of foods."

Washington College, an 800-student, liberal arts college in Chesterton, MD, and two-time, first-place winner of the National Association of College and University Foodservice Award for Best Dining Hall, has added its own twist to the breakfast bar. It features a 24-cereal bar. Only cold cereals are used and they are served in old-fashioned jars. "The bar is very popular with students. In fact, we are capturing about 60 percent of the students for breakfast with this bar," notes Jeffrey A. DeMoss, assistant food director.

Dessert bars—a popular spin off...

A popular extension of the salad bar concept is the all-you-can-eat dessert or ice cream bar. These bonanzas specialize in European pastries, expensive candies and an endless variety of pies, cakes and mousses—nearly all of them chocolate.

Hammerhead's (100 seats) in Monterey, CA, tempts customers with more than 20 chocolate specialties at its all-you-can eat "chocoholic bar." The bar features chocolate chip pecan pie, three or four different kinds of truffles, profiteroles (little scoops of ice cream in rolls) with hot fudge toppings as well as such standard favorites as mousses and chocolate chip cookies.

At the Wells-Warwick House (100 seats) in Lititz, PA (just seven miles north of Lancaster), customers don't even need to walk around the dessert display. The five-tiered lighted carousel rotates with the restaurant's 30 daily offerings of all-chocolate delicacies.

Toby Wells, chef and son of owners Ray and Judy Wells, uses about 100 pounds of chocolate a week, bought from the local Wilbur's Chocolate Factory, to create chocolate mousses, tortes, cakes, pies, cookies and candies.

Judy Wells says that most people visit the all-you-can-eat dessert bar as a special treat. "I can't think of any regular customers who come here just to eat at the dessert bar. It's a novelty, something to do on a special occasion or with a group of people."

Even though customers are invited to eat all they want, the average diner selects four or five desserts which are served in half-portions. They may finish one dessert, while only tasting the remainder.

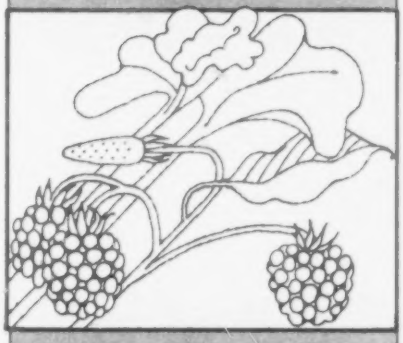
"It's just like any other buffet," Wells theorizes. "People want a taste of this and that, but can't finish everything on their plates." She adds that partakers range from salesmen who bring clients in to see the dessert bar to families and older people.

Hammerhead's charges $5.95 for the chocolate bar with the meal, and $6.95 as an entree. Wells-Warwick charges $7.95. In addition, both operators sell any item individually. Wells-Warwick labels the individual price on a fancy parchment table tent, hand-lettered in calligraphy next to each item. Hammerheads quotes several of the more popular items, such as cheesecake, by price on the menu. "For the rest, we inform the customer when they ask," says Susan Hammer.

In both operations, the chocolate bar required the addition of different equipment. "We had a special marble unit built across the back of the restaurant with built-in chocolate fudge

A typical selection

Most restaurants with salad bars offer some variation on a set group of offerings: lettuce, of course; then vegetables, which can range from broccoli to zucchini; crunchies that include croutons, sesame seeds, raisins and chow mein noodles; a selection of meats and/or cheeses and bacon bits; a fruit selection featuring fresh, canned or frozen fruits, often depending on the season; puddings and jellos; ready-made salads, such as cole slaw, three-bean, macaroni, potato and pasta; breads and, finally, extras such as soup. Also, most operators offer diet and low-calorie dressings in addition to standard favorites, such as French, Italian and blue cheese.



To increase freshness, many operators use different depth containers with the same surface dimension, allowing faster moving items to go into the deeper containers and slower moving items to go into small containers.

A restaurant can make a reputation for itself by developing signature items in any given category. At the 200-seat Souplantation in San Diego, CA, the special emphasis of the 60-item salad bar is on soups and breads. In addition to six soups made from scratch, the restaurant makes its own breads and muffins. The offerings include blueberry, apple raisin, peach, cherry nut, apricot, zucchini, corn and banana breads—all served with honey butter.

Also important is assigning an employee to attend the salad bar full-time to replenish items and maintain order. There is always the person who will take chopped eggs with the wrong spoon.

warmers, so we don't have to set an obtrusive-looking warmer on top of the marble table," explains Susan Hammer. The unit also required special lighting to best feature the chocolate creations. The Wells, on the other hand, bought the special refrigerated, lighted slow-turning chocolate dessert cabinet for chocolate creations that needed refrigeration.

Other food bars take advantage of "grazing" trend . . .

Enthused with the success of their chocolate bar, the Wells added a weekend evening Seafood Bar. "We added an area just beyond the salad and dessert bar with chafing dishes." To enlarge the area, the Wells added mirrors. "We leave the area set up during the week, with name tags sitting next to the chafing dishes to advertise the seafood bar," explains Toby Wells. "Currently 20 percent of our business on Friday and Saturday nights is at the Seafood Bar."

Church Street Station, a restored, historic restaurant complex in downtown Orlando, FL, which includes several theme restaurants with entertainment and gift shops, will add a Spanish Topas Bar this spring. "Topas," the Spanish word for insect, refers to the way a piece of food was left on bars in Spain to attract insects away from the wines. The practice quickly led to the development of bar foods.

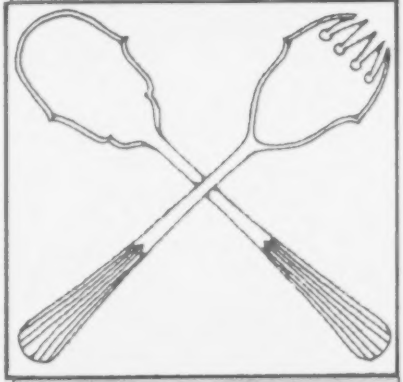
Church Street Station's version of the traditional topas bar will be in a garden setting with live orchids growing, and a 6,000-bottle wine cellar glassed over beneath the floor. According to John Rodriguez, director of food operations for Church Street Station, who designed the menu for the topas bar, "We are going to feature all sorts of pates, hors d'oeuvres, a raw bar with oysters and clams and the fresh seafood and fresh fruit available in Florida." Although the topas bar will be set up like a salad bar, customers will buy items by the piece. There will be a small price tag next to each item.

Similar to the topas bar is the "nosh Bar" (nosh being the Jewish word for snack) at the 100-seat McAbee Beach Cafe in Monterey, CA, owned by Susan and Glenn Hammer and John Dravinski, managing partner. The nosh bar offers 40 different appetizers, including four or five different kinds of sushi, marinated fish salads, pasta salads,

Check those spoon and tong sizes

Where the salad bar selections are located within the salad bar set-up and what size serving piece is used for each item can mean the difference between success or failure of the salad bar. "If you put a large serving spoon in the black olives, you'll probably go out of business," quips Bruce Reinstein of Souper Salad operations in Boston, MA.

Expensive items should be located behind other, less costly items, so they are the greatest distance away from the customer.



Using this system, most customers will fill their bowls with the inexpensive items before reaching the higher-priced ones. Also, according to experts, most customers just take a single spoon of each item. Therefore, if you put a smaller spoon in the more expensive items, they will still only take one spoonful.

In addition to spoon and tong size, reducing bowl and plate size can reduce portion sizes and decrease waste.

Salad bar abuse is another problem that concerns operators. Some customers take advantage of the all-you-can-eat policy and share their salad with their children or their dining partner. Some operators recommend assigning an employee to attend the salad bar to discourage this type of cheating. Others ask waiters and waitresses to distribute bowls to salad bar customers. This provides a degree of supervision, which helps cut down on abuse.

cheeses, chicken snacks, tortillas and mushroom appetizers.

Supermarkets too . . .

Underscoring the hardiness of the salad bar trend is the growth in offerings by supermarkets. According to the latest figures by the Food Marketing Institute (FMI), Washington, DC, 10 percent of the supermarkets surveyed had salad bars in 1984—up from three percent a year earlier. Easily able to handle a salad bar, with all the makings near at hand, supermarkets are rapidly getting into the act.

FMI figures also showed that about one-fourth of those offering a salad bar set up tables and chairs to form a sit-down eating area for salad bar patrons. J. Bildner & Sons in Boston, MA, a very upscale supermarket operation, offers 30 items that rotate daily, depending on what is in season. Madeleine Fox Gens, director of marketing for J. Bildner, explains, "What makes us different is that we have a chef and commissary at each of our six stores, and our chefs have experience in restaurants or hotels." This means Bildner offers a wide selection of prepared salads, made fresh each day along with the usual vegetable selection. "Also, we offer entrees in our deli, right next to the salad bar, including such items as glazed duck, steamed shrimp and beef or salmon Wellington."

The latest twist, however, is J. Bildner's new breakfast bar. Using the same equipment that is used for salads at lunch, Bildner is adding extra sales at breakfast. "We have actually brought together the produce, deli, dairy and bakery departments to create our breakfast bar," explains Gens. "We offer bagels and cream cheese, coffee, croissants, donuts, muffins, as well as yogurt, fresh squeezed juices and fresh fruit." Since Bildner does a tremendous volume in breakfast trade, located in highly trafficked areas, they even set up a separate cash register for the breakfast bar patrons, who are in a hurry to get to work.

In sum . . .

Salad bars are more popular than ever with both customers and operators. As competition increases, so does their variety, imagination and use. What was once an afterthought has now become a drawing card for all types of restaurants. ❑

17 STEPS TO DEVELOPING A WINNING MENU

In the taverns, inns and roadhouses of days gone by, the menu served as no more than a written communication to passersby of foods available for purchase. As the foodservice industry matured and customers began to achieve higher levels of dining sophistication, the function of the menu changed.

Today, that simple bill of fare has evolved into a powerful merchandizing and marketing tool. As a strong

by Norma J. Gray

source of advertisement, the successful contemporary menu reflects the style, ambiance, attitude and quality of the operation itself. It serves to entertain and suggest, persuade and please, set the mood and win over even the most tentative diner. As a highly useful sales tool, the menu should be constantly scrutinized, analyzed, altered, evaluated and improved.

The process of menu creation cannot be haphazard for it is both an art and a science. Imagination, coupled with an organized method for menu writing, can provide the coveted results—a restaurant that draws curious newcomers and keeps bringing back established customers.

A systematic approach must be used in developing a menu if it is to function as an effective marketing tool. The first step is to establish a concept for the restaurant by identifying the specific market segment.

Conduct a market study

One of the best investments you can make when developing a menu is to develop a strong base of information about your present and potential customers. Such a market study should detail their food preferences and ascertain the style of service best suited to their particular lifestyle. Based on this information, a menu can be developed to fit their food and beverage preferences within an appropriate price range.

Perform a competitive analysis

The next step is to study the foodservice operations in your area that would compete with your concept. A critical part of the menu development process is a thorough knowledge of how and what the competition is doing. An evaluation of the market will provide data on market demand, patron statistics, dining trends and habits. Allow the time and energy to shop the competition and pay attention to these major factors:

- *ambiance*—How are the decor and theme of the restaurant presented? What type of lighting is used? Is there music/entertainment? Are the tabletops effective?
- *service*—Is the service prompt and timely? Are the personnel pleasant and cordial? Is the service procedure correct?
- *food and beverage*—What are the signature items? What is the quality of the food and beverage?
- *value*—What are the price ranges of each category of food?
- *cover counts*—How many guests are dining during a busy meal, and what is the count during a slow period?
- *additional services*—Does the property offer banquet facilities or takeout services?

After the fact-finding mission, analyze the total picture by preparing a spreadsheet that details the food and beverage selections and prices. The spreadsheet will prove valuable in determining your niche in the market.

"When selecting food items, be sure they can be used in different ways on the menu."

Interview restaurant critics/reviewers

One often overlooked resource for menu development assistance is the local restaurant critic or reviewer. Few people in a community are as well-acquainted with the area dining spots as the restaurant reviewer. A local reviewer can be contacted to provide specific information on favorite regional foods, preferred preparation techniques and appropriate range of prices as well as to confirm the validity of your basic concept.

Attend food shows

Food shows are an excellent way to obtain menu ideas. Local, state and national restaurant association shows provide an extensive view of equipment and foods. In addition, they frequently offer educational programs that provide timely information on the topic of menu development. Not to be missed at the national or state shows is the culinary art salon, which features new menu ideas along with trend-setting garnishes.

Although the initial sample tastings of food products at food shows are not as formalized as official taste test panels, be sure to taste products critically. Judge each product for taste/seasonings, texture, appearance and portion size.

Also ask yourself these questions:

- Does the product fit in with my concept and theme?
- How will customers accept this product?
- Would use of a commercial item result in a better product?
- Would the restaurant lose part of its appeal by using convenience products?

Consider using commercial products if the switch to a prepared product would upgrade the standards, quality and consistency of the menu items, would increase the bottom line by lowering labor costs or would compensate for menu limitations due to inadequate kitchen equipment or ventilation. For example, when renovating space for an existing office building or in a store within a mall, the ability to vent grease-laden vapors may not be possible. In such a case the use of convenience products would provide more variety. Commercial products may also be the answer if there is high staff turnover, if an operation is rapidly expanding into several outlets or if a union wage scale prohibits the employment of specialized personnel, such as bakers.

A number of large food purveyors sponsor their own annual food shows to display their products. These shows offer a glimpse at product trends and provide considerable prod-

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uct information. Careful analysis of how these food items relate to your proposed menu is often worth your time.

Develop a unified theme

All areas of a restaurant, including external and internal design, space utilization, food and beverage selections, service style, type of entertainment and price structure, must work together to present a unified theme. For example, a "gay 90s" theme could be supported by turn-of-the-century furnishings, a menu that resembles an old-fashioned newspaper, service personnel wearing bow ties and aprons and music provided by a player piano.

The messages conveyed by the menu, in terms of the selections offered, the range of prices and the descriptions used, should complement one another. The design, color and general appearance of the menu should match the decor, style and quality of the restaurant.

Include current trends

Including trends within the menu makes good business sense since today's dining patron requires a menu with variety and imagination. An excellent starting point is to research industry periodicals, cookbooks and food magazines that highlight trends.

Other resources for good menu suggestions geared to quantity production are available from trade associations, corporations and regional economic and community development councils.

Today's trends reflect the diverse preferences of the dining patron. Current concepts include strong customer attraction to

- American regional cuisine
- on-premises baking
- non-alcoholic drinks
- healthy fare
- daily features selections
- hardwood grilling
- traditional ethnic foods and
- grazing.

"Pay as much attention to the dessert listings as to the entree category."

Analyze nutritional content

Since nutrition is a key concern of today's dining patrons, many restaurateurs are interested in incorporating "healthy fare" into their menus. During the recipe research stage of menu development, recipes can be nutritionally analyzed for content of fat, sugar, salt, calories, etc.

Other ways to boost the nutritonal content of the menu include

- replacing sauteing and frying with more nutritionally advantageous techniques of broiling, steaming, baking or poaching.
- using fresh spices and herbs to improve flavors of simply prepared foods and to cut down on the need for salt.
- creating signature sauces that rely on citrus products or wine instead of cream and butter and
- featuring sections on both lunch and dinner menus that offer "light fare" as well as salads, combinations of soup and salad or soup and a half-sandwich.

Ensure variety and balance of menu items

Once you have finished the preliminary research, develop an outline for your menu that includes each major category, such as appetizers, soups, salads, sandwiches, entrees, desserts and beverages. This outline can be used to assure a balance of food items in keeping with your competitive analysis and the expectations of your targeted dining guest. It can also help you decide how many menu items to include.

The right combination of different foods, flavors, methods of preparation and food temperatures should produce a menu with enough variety to please your targeted guest.

From the structure and guidelines that are provided in the menu outline, develop a descriptive menu. Be sure menu descriptions are accurate, include primary ingredients and the main method of preparation for each item. If a food offering is unusual, or is a signature item, the description should detail the merits of that selection. The menu that communicates is

Plating and Portioning Guide

Recipe:

Date:

Item:

Meal period:

Station:

Plate:

Ingredients	Portion	Garnish	Accompaniments

a far better sales tool than one that simply lists foods and beverages. Here is an example of how a menu from an all-purpose hotel restaurant moved from the outline to the descriptive stage.

Menu outline	Descriptive menu
2 poultry entrees	(1) Breast of Chicken with Champagne Cream Sauce (2) Roasted Chicken Cordon Bleu
3 seafood entrees	(1) Beer Battered Coconut Shrimp (2) Baked Scallops de Jonghe (3) Seafood Brochette with Shrimp, Scallops, White Fish and Vegetables
1 fish entree	Fresh Fish of the Day
3 beef entrees	(1) Roast Prime Ribs of Beef (2) Chargrilled Filet Mignon (3) Top Sirloin with Red Onion Butter
1 lamb entree	Mustard Ginger Lamb Chops

A features or specials section on your menu can provide a manageable means of expanding the menu and providing variety. It can give you the opportunity to

- use fresh seasonal food products
- take advantage of purveyors' specials
- alter the price range to cater to special groups and
- develop a seasonal wine menu.

Price the menu accurately

The strategy for menu pricing includes four major steps.

- Analyze the cost of each recipe to include not only the ingredients but also all the surrounding items, such as the garnish and accompaniments.
- Review the prices charged by the competition.
- Determine the selling prices of each item based on your food and beverage cost goals. All menu categories should reflect a range of prices in keeping with the average check. For example, if the predicted average check for food is in the $20 range, appetizers should fall between $3 to $5 each, entrees should be in the area of $10 to $18 and desserts should be between $2 and $4 each.
- Decide the menu item's position on the menu based on the profit each item will yield. As a general rule, the first listing of each category is the best seller, so the item that provides the biggest profit should be listed in that optimum location.

Check on availability of food products

For items that are to be included on the permanent menu, be sure to check on year-round availability at acceptable prices. For example, the price range of some seafood and fresh vegetables fluctuates to such a degree that unless the year-round average price of an item is considered, the targeted food cost cannot be met. In addition to assuring a fairly consistent price level, be sure that the food quality can also remain stable.

Carefully analyze the menu mix based on frequency of deliveries, amount of storage space and turnover. When selecting food items, be sure they can be used in different ways on the menu. This is especially critical for perishable items, such as seafood. For example, if mussels are featured as an appetizer item, include mussels as an ingredient in a seafood and pasta salad.

Taste test score sheet

	Ratings			
5 Excellent 4 Above average 3 Average 2 Below average 1 Poor				
Taste				
Seasoning				
Portion size				
Appearance				
Plate presentation				
Garnish				

Comments _____

_____

_____

Match the menu with the skill level of kitchen personnel and balance the production stations

The skill level of your production staff is critical to the success of the menu. The capabilities required at the saute station, the experience necessary in the bakery, the knowledge of the meat cookery mandatory at the broiler station and the artistic attention needed at the pantry station are considerations to be matched against the skills of local food production personnel. It is senseless to write an upscale menu unless the talent exists to produce the menu with consistent quality. Of course, training tools are the best way to ensure consistent quality once the staff is matched up to the skill level demanded by the menu.

Be sure to establish a balance among the various work stations so that the staff and equipment can be utilized to their fullest potential. The intent is to provide an equal workload of equipment and staff by developing a menu that will yield a combination of broiling, frying, sauteing and other cooking methods. A production station flowchart serves as a scheduling technique to ensure that one area of the kitchen is not overloaded while another stands idle. It verifies that the proposed menu can be produced with the available kitchen equipment.

Control labor costs

When designing a menu, several factors can assist in saving labor costs. Among these are

- *kitchen design* that allows production to flow smoothly. The size and layout of the kitchen dramatically affect the efficiency of the operation.
- *quality convenience foods* that meet the same level of quality or offer su-

"As a general rule, the first listing of each menu category is the best seller."

perior quality to products made "from scratch."
- *equipment* that keeps manual labor to a minimum.

Increase sales with menu merchandising of appetizers and desserts

Be sure to include interesting appetizers and desserts that entice the dining guest into an unplanned purchase. All too frequently appetizer selections contain outdated standbys, such as a fruit cup, or high-priced presentations, such as shrimp cocktail. These items do not entice customers and, therefore, sales are low. But if the appetizer selections include current and interesting items, such as wide selections of ethnic offerings, appetizer sales should increase. Although these selections are presently enjoying a great deal of acceptance, within a few seasons they, too, will be out of date and should be replaced with other items.

Pay as much attention to the dessert listings as to the entree category. There should be a carefully planned balance of offerings that might include a traditional American apple pie or a variation of this most popular dessert. Other best sellers to include in the dessert section might be cheesecake, ice creams and a chocolate offering. Be sure to include at least one low-calorie dessert to provide variety. Finally, the dessert selections should entice the guests with appealing descriptions.

Now that the research stage of the menu development process is complete, the next step is to establish control with tested standardized recipes, portion controls and garnishing standards.

Test recipes and make adjustments

Proper research and testing of recipes are important factors affecting the success of any given menu item. The proposed recipes should be tested in a commercial environment. Any adjustments required due to available equipment, holding times and volume produced should be made.

For example, when using a tilting skillet, considerations must be made for the loss of moisture due to surface exposure.

Standardize recipes

After the initial testing, recipes should be documented to ensure that ingredients and their measurements are used accurately. Standardized recipes also assure that the finished product is of consistent quality regardless of who prepares the product. They also provide a ready basis for cost analysis and a cost per serving.

A number of factors should be included within each standardized recipe format. They are
- *the name of the recipe* with the number and size of portions
- *a list of ingredients*, with a statement of amount and weight and/or volume and description. Use descriptive terms before the name of the ingredient to designate the kind or form required. For example, canned tomatoes, cooked turkey, active dry yeast, boiling water, sifted flour. Use descriptive terms after the name of the ingredient to designate necessary preparation which makes the form of the ingredient different from the form as purchased or cooked. For example, canned diced beets, drained; onions, chopped; celery, cut in one-inch pieces.
- *the order and method of combining ingredients*
- *equipment* required for processing
- *appearance or condition at various stages*, as a guide during the preparation
- *the processing time*
- *temperatures* to be used in processing and
- *any special directions* or descriptions needed to guide quality, control portion size or add appeal.

Conduct a taste testing

As a major part of the menu development process, organize a taste test panel. Panel members should be impartial and have a broad range of foodservice experience. They should judge the quality, taste, seasoning, portion size and presentation of food. (See sample score sheet.)

Once the panel members have rated the product or recipe, the group should discuss the item and make recommendations. The outcome of the taste test panel should be a final menu with accompanying standard recipes.

Establish garnish, plating and portion standards

Another helpful method of documentation is a plating, portioning and photography guide. The guide ensures consistency of plate presentation. Each production station should have a laminated guide sheet depicting every item produced at that station, with instructions for assembling the items.

Just as fashions change, so do the criteria for garnishing food. The present trend is to provide an edible garnish that adds value and complementary flavors to the main item. The garnish should be practical, with the ability to withstand the heat of warming lamps. The colorful savoy kale and the traditional dark green kale are examples of attractive and hearty garnishes.

Portions should, at least, meet industry standard trends. For example, the portion size for a hamburger in today's marketplace must be at least one-third of a pound and preferably one-half of a pound of ground beef. Pricing of each menu item is directly related to the portion served. Therefore, it is important to establish portion sizes and to document those in recipes and standard portion charts for the production staff.

In sum . . .

A systematic approach to creating a new menu requires coordination of industry resources with established controls. The end product should be a menu that is efficiently and consistently produced in the kitchen and pleasing to the dining guests. ❑

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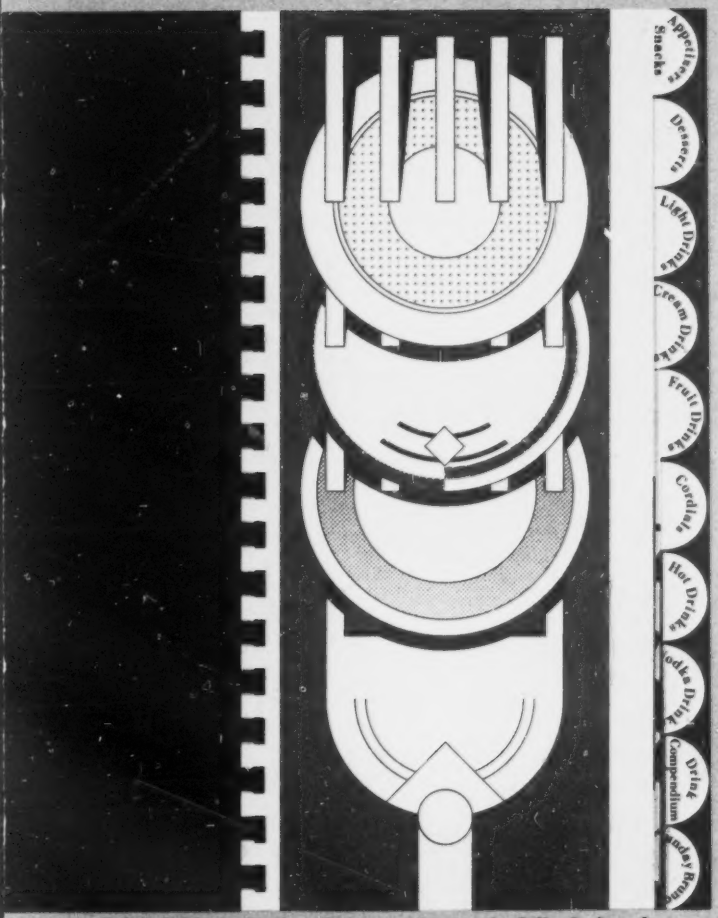
Menu Size Debate

LARGE VS. SMALL

by Cecelia Niepold



T.G.I. Friday's (Dallas, TX) provides a colorfully designed "book" of diverse entrees.

Harvest in Cambridge, MA, offers a limited menu which changes daily to reflect seasonal items.

A menu's size is as individual as a restaurant's personality. Some menus are large, almost book-size, offering dozens of options to please a broad-based clientele. Others are small, with a dozen entrees or less that change daily, in keeping with a restaurant's intimate, personalized focus or perhaps its emphasis on seasonal specialties.

There is no perfect formula. In fact, as this article points out, there are advantages and disadvantages to both types of menus—and the wide spectrum in between. No matter what the size, however, a menu signals who you are to your customers and helps provide a framework for how you run your operation in both the front and back of the house.

Large menu PROS

Many restaurateurs have found that offering a wide variety of entrees can be a plus. Here are some of the reasons why.

Broader customer base. Large menus often appeal to a broader range of customers.

The T.G.I. Friday's menu, for instance, has been designed to "offer something for everyone." Believing that dining out is no longer a special occasion but a way of life, Friday's offers a variety of entrees to suit any whim. "We wanted a broad enough representation so customers would not have to make a menu selection before coming to us," explains Dan Scoggin, president and CEO of the chain. Consequently, menu items range from appetizers, which can be eaten as small meals, to full-size dinners.

New patrons. Some restaurateurs believe that patrons are more comfortable trying an unfamiliar restaurant or concept if the menu offers enough choice.

In Clover, La Grange, GA

Harry Whelden found this to be true at his 220-seat Maine Lobster in Sioux Falls, SD. The restaurant offers more than 30 different entrees, but the primary emphasis is on fresh seafood. Enticing beef-bred Midwesterners to try unfamiliar seafood dishes was a challenge. To overcome customers' hesitancy, Whelden decided to pair seafood selections with beef, rib or chicken dishes. The combination platters have worked well.

Repeat business. Customers may return more frequently if they know a restaurant offers different entrees to suit different moods.

Repeat patronage is a top priority for Johanna Stark, owner of In Clover, a 110-seat restaurant located in the small town of La Grange, GA. Because her customer market is limited by the town's population, Stark offers more than 20 entrees, including beef, poultry, seafood and vegetarian dishes, to get the same people to come back more frequently. "One week people will come in after the movies for a quick hamburger; the next week they may come in to entertain friends for dinner," Stark reports.

Responsiveness to customers. Large inventories generally go hand-in-hand with extensive menus. Having extra ingredients available can help restaurateurs meet the needs of their customers more effectively.

This is an important advantage for The Pump Room, an elegant 250-seat restaurant in the Ambassador East Hotel in Chicago, IL, which caters to hotel guests as well as local patrons. "If a customer comes in and wants something special, chances are that we'll have it in-house or at least have something that will meet their needs," says Susan Stiles, general manager. In addition, the restaurant offers five daily menus that feature a mixture of American and Continental dishes.

Menu flexibility. Large inventories also provide the opportunity to introduce new items without drastically altering the menu. This can be a plus for restaurateurs who want to keep up with changing customer tastes. A flexible inventory can also help reduce waste since chefs can utilize leftover or extra in-

Dennery's, Jackson, MS

gredients to create new dishes.

John Dennery, owner of the 250-seat Dennery's in Jackson, MS, has successfully used his restaurant's extensive inventory to expand his restaurant's well-established traditional steak and seafood menu without alienating loyal customers. Rotating specials, ranging from nouvelle cuisine dishes to entrees with a Cajun accent, are created from the existing inventory.

Large menu CONS

Large menus also have some disadvantages. Here is a look at several of the potential problems that can accompany large menus and some suggestions for managing them.

Inventory expense. Large menus require an extensive inventory. This can be expensive to maintain as well as hard to plan for. Purchasing inaccurate quantities can lead to waste or inconvenient shortages. To avoid such problems, operators suggest

- keeping accurate records to monitor inventory and sales of individual items,
- utilizing ingredients in more than one dish and
- developing specials that take advantage of extra ingredients or slow-selling items.

Maintaining fresh quality. "Every restaurant critic is convinced you can't have a menu the size of ours and still serve fresh food," says Vinnie Pascal, a partner in the 350-seat America restaurant in New York City, which offers almost 200 regional American entrees. But Pascal is positive that quality can be maintained with proper purchasing and planning, such as

- scheduling frequent deliveries to avoid excess storage,
- working with a variety of suppliers to ensure top quality and
- developing control systems, such as day-dating and rotation procedures.

Space requirements. Maintaining a large inventory requires ample storage, cooking equipment and work areas. Careful equipment purchasing and kitchen design can boost space effectiveness. Choosing menu items that can be prepared in similar ways also can help maximize equipment usage.

Training. "The more complex the menu, the more professional the people have to be," maintains Dan Scoggin of Friday's. There is no doubt about it, extensive menus require more staff training. Chefs must be more versatile, and servers must understand a variety of preparation and presentation techniques so they can thoroughly explain all dishes to customers.

After the initial training period, John Dennery has found that posting daily menu changes and providing staff with samples of new items helps make menu transitions smoother.

Vague image. The old saying, "You can't be everything to everyone," still rings true in the restaurant business. Restaurants that try to offer a little of everything can end up with an identity crisis. Offering variety can entice customers, but too many options can also confuse customers' perceptions of a restaurant.

Limited menu PROS

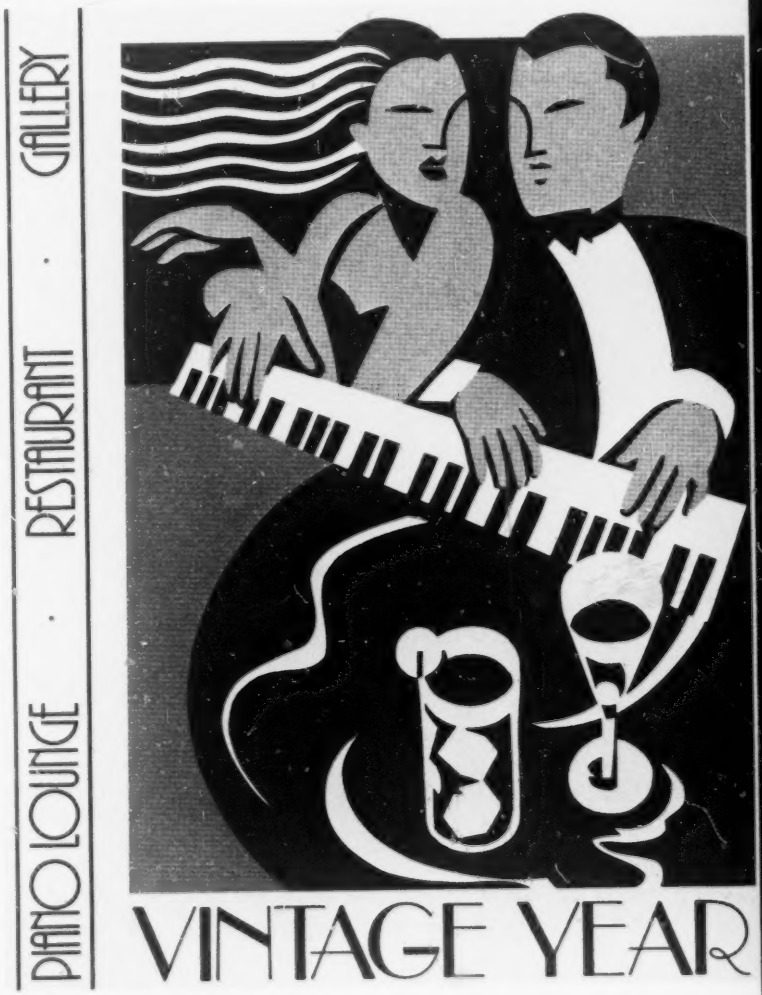
Offering fewer menu items can simplify and reduce operational costs—a real plus. Here are some reasons why.

Low overhead. For many restaurants, particularly small establishments, operational expenses are a prime concern. A limited menu can keep these costs down.

At the Cafe Musee, an 80-seat eatery located in the J.B. Speed Museum in Louisville, KY, a staff of seven seats, serves and prepares lunch for a steady crowd of museum visitors and local guests. Owner Luckett Davidson maintains that the five-item menu (which changes frequently to reflect different exhibits) keeps costs down due to its simple inventory requirements and preparation time. "We decided to do a few things really well rather than overextend ourselves," says Davidson.

Efficient inventory usage. A smaller menu generally means a less extensive inventory.

Judy Martin, co-owner of the 50-seat Vintage Year in Montgomery, AL, believes her five to six-item menu offers better inventory control than would a larger menu. "A restaurant with a large menu that has a slow night can be stuck with a lot



Vintage Year, Montgomery, AL

of wasted food," she says.

Ability to use seasonal ingredients. Offering a limited number of entrees often enables operators to take advantage of unusual seasonal items. This is the case at Chanterelle in Manhattan where the menu changes every other week. "For us it was important to focus in on unusual items that were not always available," says Karen Waltuck, co-owner.

Quality control. Carl Hinshaw, co-owner of the 150-seat Chalet Suzanne in Lake Wales, FL, has found that offering a small menu is the best way to maintain quality. His formula has worked well for the Chalet; its carefully developed seven-item gourmet menu has been a central Florida landmark for more than half a century.

Flexibility. Many chefs enjoy the stimulation of constant change and innovation, and a small menu, which can be changed frequently, offers an avenue for this kind of creativity.

For instance, Carol Serber, co-owner and chef of the 100-seat Troutdale restaurant in Troutdale, VA, adapts her 10 to 13-item menu according to what is in season and what mood she is in. "I don't have to stay with any one style," she explains. "It gives me the opportunity to experiment and give people a taste of different things." For variety, Serber takes advantage of local ingredients, the fish her husband catches daily in nearby streams and fresh vegetables and herbs from their garden.

Unique niche. Many operators have found that focusing on a few select specialties can help create a distinct personality or sparkle for their restaurant.

Nipper's, a 100-seat restaurant in Beverly Hills, CA, has found success with a very focused but limited menu—champagne, caviar and desserts. Although a wide variety of champagne is available, only a few luxurious edibles are offered. Owners Horatio Lonsdale-Hands and Arthur von Wiesenberger wanted to create a unique restaurant that would appeal to a sophisticated upscale crowd. The limited menu with its distinctly elegant flavor provides the framework for their concept.

Nipper's, Beverly Hills, CA

Limited menu CONS

Here are several drawbacks of limited menus and some ways for solving the possible problems.

Narrower customer base. Limited menus offer fewer choices. This can reduce a restaurant's customer base. To present a broader image most operators balance their menus. Judy Martin at Vintage Year always includes seafood as well as poultry, veal or beef on her five to six-item menu. To tempt customers to try unfamiliar items, Martin presents complimentary appetizer-size portions of new entrees at the beginning of the meal. "Sometimes people are just afraid to order something they haven't tried," she says. "Once they taste it and find they like it they usually order it."

Other restaurateurs maintain that their small menu operations are flexible enough to accommodate individual preferences. As Carol Serber says, "Because our food is not prepared in advance, I can easily fix a special dish for someone." She believes this kind of personal touch encourages patrons to come back to Troutdale.

Less repeat business. Because of the limited number of entrees, customers may perceive the establishment as only a "special occasion" place.

To combat this, many operators with limited menus vary their selections frequently. "Customers know we have a limited menu and that we change it," says Karen Waltuck at Chanterelle. "They get excited about the changes and call up to find out what's coming next so they can make reservations."

Not all operators with small menus change their selections to entice patrons, however. The menu at Chalet Suzanne has not changed during the 54 years the restaurant has been in operation, but customers return over and over again to order their favorite dishes.

Maintaining enough inventory. Ironically, although small menus offer better inventory control, maintaining enough inventory can be a problem. "Because we are small and out of the way, we have trouble getting people to deliver since we don't need bulk orders," explains Carol Serber whose Troutdale restaurant is nestled in the Virginia mountains. To solve the problem, Serber tries to plan ahead and purchase larger quantities of hard-to-get items. She also has learned to be very flexible and simply devises new menus when she cannot get certain ingredients.

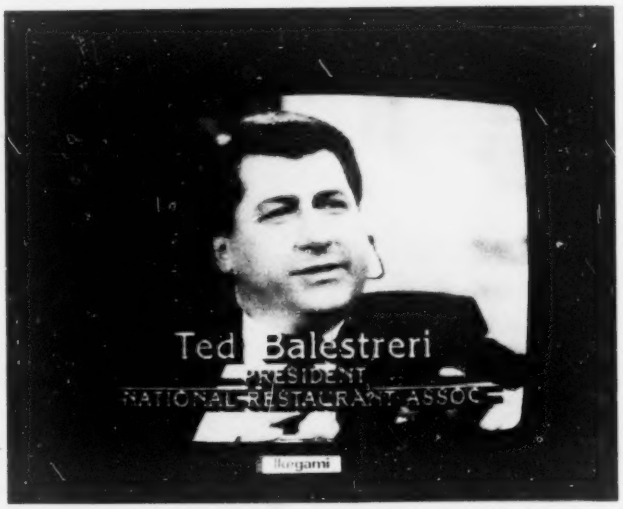
Limited-menu restaurants in bustling towns may have difficulty making purchases as well. Small suppliers can offer more flexibility. Independent local farmers also can be an excellent source of fresh products.

Developing new ideas. Innovative creations are often a trademark of small-menu restaurants, but constantly developing new combinations can be tough. "Although it is fun changing the menu every week or two, coming up with new ideas and training the staff can be very time-consuming," says Judy Martin. To make things work, Martin underscores the importance of good staff communication and recommends that the chef be an integral part of the decision-making process. ❑

THE BOARD ROOM

Balestreri in the spotlight on "Good Morning America"

Since assuming office last May, NRA Chairman of the Board and President Ted J. Balestreri (Sardine Factory, Monterey, CA) has proven to be an effective communicator with the media. In addition to a battery of media tours across the country to emphasize the negative economic consequences of reducing the deduction for business entertainment meals, Balestreri has appeared on ABC-TV's highly-rated morning show, "Good Morning America." During his Friday, January 10 appearance with show host David Hartman, Norman Brinker of Chili's, Inc. and Allen Bernstein of Le Peep Restaurants, Balestreri discussed the growth of the $186 billion foodservice industry and trends fueling industry expansion, such as breakfast business, takeout foods and the consumer's continued interest in the hamburger.



NRA produces video opposing business meal caps

With the Senate finance Committee soon to begin hearings on H.R. 3838, the House tax bill which includes a provision limiting all business meal deduc-

NRA President and Chairman of the Board Ted Balestreri voices the industry's opposition to limiting business meal deductions in NRA-produced video.

tions to 80 percent, the National Restaurant Association is producing a videoclip voicing the industry's opposition to this measure. NRA Chairman of the Board and President Ted Balestreri (Sardine Factory, Monterey, CA), Vice President G. "Jim" Hasslocher (Frontier Enterprises, San Antonio, TX); Treasurer Michael J. Grisanti (Casa Grisanti, Inc., Louisville, KY) and NRA Director John R. Farquharson (ARASERVE, Philadelphia, PA) are featured speakers in the 15-minute program, which will be sent to President Reagan, members of the Senate Finance Committee and state restaurant associations across the country.

If you agree that efforts to limit the business meal deduction are unjust and will result in decreased restaurant sales, lost jobs and reduced monies for federal, state and local treasuries, write your U.S. senators at the U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510.

New York Times runs Balestreri article

NRA Chairman of the Board and President Ted J. Balestreri took up the foodservice industry's banner against mandatory labeling of packaged fast food in a guest editorial in the business section of the Sunday, January 12, 1986 *New York Times*. Balestreri's piece, entitled "It's No Secret What's in Fast Food," restates the industry's opposition to this impractical and costly measure, a position also recently embraced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The piece is printed in its entirety below:

The New York Times

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 1986

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It's No Secret What's in Fast Food

By TED J. BALESTRERI

PATRONS of fast-food restaurants — especially those people with allergies or on restricted diets — have the right to know the ingredients of the food they eat. The question is, What method does a restaurant operator use to convey this information to those customers who want it?

Ingredient labeling on fast-food packaging just will not work. The wrappers and containers used in today's fast-food restaurants are multipurpose. For instance, colas, sugarless colas, iced tea, shakes, fruit juices and other beverages are all served in the same size container. If labeling on fast-food packaging were mandatory, a different container would have to be produced for each drink.

These containers would have to be stored in the establishment, and servers would have to be trained to select the right container for the right drink. Losses in time, space and money would be totally incompatible with the economies that allow the rapid service and low prices that characterize fast-food restaurants.

Or take the instance cited last month by the Agriculture Department, as it was rejecting a petition for mandatory labeling. If a fast-service pizza parlor offered pizza in three sizes with 10 different toppings, it would be offering 300 different products, which would require 300 different packages. Where would you store them? How much time would it take to find the right box? How much would it all cost?

Ingredient labeling on packaging is a procedure developed for the supermarket, which carries products standardized and packaged by processors before being placed on the shelf. It is totally impractical in a fast-food restaurant, where food processing and packaging are rapidly done to order and on location.

Besides the impracticality of the ingredient labeling proposal, there is the question of usefulness. Too often, reading the fine print on an ingredient label is like taking a crash course in organic chemistry without the help of a teacher. Labeling menu items with a lot of technical terms would not convey information to the typical customer, but it might convey unnecessary apprehension.

Chemical compounds such as acetic acid, adipic acid, calcium caseinates, xanthan gum, and hydroxypropyl methylcellulose are fairly common elements in ingredient lists. They do not tell the average restaurant patron much of anything, yet that average restaurant patron will end up paying for the appearance of that list on his or her wrapper or container.

What about the customer who has become familiar with such terms because of health concerns? How can this small but significant group of customers obtain the list of ingredients they may need to safeguard their health?

Ingredient information has always been available by calling or writing the headquarters of the appropriate fast-food company. In some instances, the response will take the form of printed materials. In other instances, a nutritionist will answer the inquiry over the phone.

FOOD service is a highly competitive business. Restaurants are by necessity extremely sensitive to the demands of their customers. Whether in regard to menu selection or information, they offer the items and services their clientele wants. If wants and needs change, you can be sure that market-sensitive fast-food establishments will offer new items or services in the form desired.

Mandatory labeling on packaged fast food is the most expensive and least effective means of communicating ingredient information. It is the means espoused by those who believe that Government intervention is the answer to every problem, large or small, and who refuse to take matters such as relative costs and benefits into consideration.

Federal regulators in two successive Administrations have ruled against mandatory ingredient labeling in food-service establishments. Under the Carter Administration, the Food and Drug Administration and the Agriculture Department determined that regulations requiring content labeling of packaged food sold in supermarkets should not be extended to the restaurant industry. Both agencies agreed that a system of mandatory ingredient labeling was unworkable in the restaurant industry, where menu items and ingredients vary daily.

Last month, the Agriculture Department responded negatively to the most recent petition for ingredient labeling in fast-food restaurants, citing the "number and possible combination of food components inside any wrapper or container" and the lack of evidence that such a regulation "would provide a net public benefit in view of the costs involved."

When the regulators under both Democratic and Republican Administrations decline an opportunity to regulate, you can be certain that the proposed regulation was a pretty far-fetched response to the question at hand. ■

Ted J. Balestreri is president and chairman of the board of the National Restaurant Association, an industry trade group.

—*Dorothy Dee*

Some key executives not only reach the pinnacle of success in their organizations but also move those organizations to even greater heights. I have tried to identify those qualities that can lead to major accomplishment and success so those elements can be cultivated in others. I have observed and worked with a number of highly successful executives in the past and have found five "people skills" common to all of them. Here they are, in no particular order of priority.

1. Are supportive of subordinates. Successful executives do not emotionally abuse or bruise people with cynicism or sarcasm. They do not take precipitous or whimsical actions that embarrass or reduce the stature of subordinates in the eyes of others, betray trust or exercise unwarranted power that undercuts or retards the best interest of their subordinates and the long-term best interest of the organization.

Successful executives are supportive of people, possessing an ability to remember names and circumstances that are of personal importance to those under them. In this way, successful executives are considered to be "down to earth," thoughtful, caring people—not just business automatons. They emphasize the positive traits and virtues of subordinates and frequently acknowledge the "team" nature of organizational endeavors without sounding like a paid corporate cheerleader. They are able to evoke the maximum effort of subordinates by bonding performance to organizational loyalty. They stand behind and with subordinates.

2. Delegate trust. Successful executives have made the transition from being "hard charging go-getters" to deliberative "thinker-planners" looking to the long-term future of their organizations. They recognize they cannot do all the work themselves. Thus, they delegate responsibility and assignments, but they also delegate trust, which subordinates perceive as an expression of mutual commitment. In this way, successful executives are more than leaders of their organizations: They are statesmen and stateswomen of their industries and, often, of their communities as well.

3. Balance control. Successful executives do not overmanage by overcontrolling, overanalyzing, overreporting, overcommunicating or overmeeting. Nor do they cause overwork. They keep effectiveness and efficiency in mind, to be sure, but they also structure control systems to facilitate progress, not inhibit it. They are not encircled in their thinking nor are they chained to their personal past or to the tradition or custom within their organizations. They stress *adaptation* and imbue this outlook in subordinates. They are open, not secretive, and encourage contrary views in an atmosphere of respectful tolerance to be sure all views are expressed.

4. Approach people directly. Successful executives are very direct in their relationships with others. Not only is this necessary from a time-saving standpoint, but the sturdy organizational framework that comes from people "being up-front" and "knowing where they stand" is also the healthiest environment in which to thrive.

Successful executives do not engage in, or promote, internal political intrigue or tolerate destructive rival factions within the organization. They are outspoken without being offensive, objectively critical without being caustic, future-focused within the bounds of reality and measurement-conscious without being inflexible. They are understanding at both the human and business levels.

5. Possess "sixth sense" about people. Successful executives seem to have an innate ability to "read" people quickly and accurately; and accordingly, they surround themselves with other able persons possessing complementary talents with minimal conflicting or irritating characteristics. Successful executives give considerable rein to their subordinates and do not "bash them" to fit preformed molds in an organizational cubical. They have a strong awareness of self, but they also have a keen awareness of subordinates and matters affecting them both positively and negatively. They demand of themselves and of their subordinates: excellence, not excuses; self-esteem, not haughtiness; confidence, not arrogance; concern, not insensitivity; and a progressive perspective, not blind ambition.

There are many other factors bearing on the success of successful executives, but people skills are undoubtedly the most important. Someone once said that 80 percent of successful management is getting along with people. I don't know if the number is right, but the thought certainly is. It is time for **Fisher's 69th law: There is a strong, positive correlation between good people sense and good business cents!**

New

Member to Member

NRA's 1986 membership drive

Recruit a new NRA member and receive a 20% discount off next year's renewal dues. You will receive an additional 20% off your dues for each member you recruit. By signing up 5 new members, a current NRA member will qualify to receive next year's membership free.*

***PLUS* a bonus drawing for recruits**

Each qualified NRA membership recruiter** will be eligible to win in a vacation trip drawing. The vacation drawing will take place at the NRA Show in Chicago this May. The winner will have an opportunity to visit one of America's culinary capitals—New York, Los Angeles or San Francisco. Accommodations to be provided by Hyatt Hotels.

*To receive a recruiter's discount on next year's NRA membership dues, new member's dues must be at least equal to recruiter's discount.
**New memberships must be properly documented. Special application forms are being mailed to all NRA members along with more information on the NRA 1986 membership drive.
You need not be present at the NRA Show to win.

1982 Census Update

Metropolitan restaurant sales up

This article spotlights eating place sales and number of establishments for major U.S. metropolitan areas for restaurants and lunchrooms (outlets which offer tableservice) and refreshment places (limited menu, fast food restaurants which generally do not offer tableservice). It also augments regional and state sales and unit information presented in the May 1985 ***NRA NEWS****. The 27 metropolitan areas covered here, representing a broad cross section of cities across the United States, are the areas for which the government regularly publishes economic statistics such as the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The statistics are for eating places with payroll only.*

Eating place sales in many of the nation's major metropolitan areas exhibited strong growth between 1977 and 1982, according to data from the *1982 Census of Retail Trade*. Especially significant advances occurred in cities in the South and West, while metropolitan areas in the East and Midwest posted somewhat smaller advances.

Unit growth surges in South and West . . .

In general, Southern and Western metropolitan areas recorded the most substantial advances in the number of eating place establishments between 1977 and 1982. Of the 15 cities reporting above average gains in eating place units, 11 are in Southern and Western states. In addition, the top five metropolitan areas in terms of unit expansion include San Diego (up 26.0 percent), Atlanta (up 25.4 percent), Seattle (up 24.6 percent), Houston (up 21.6 percent) and Anchorage (up 21.3 percent).

Areas recording the smallest increases in the number of eating place establishments are largely in the East and Midwest and include New York (down 1.2 percent), Cleveland (up 1.9 percent), Philadelphia (up 2.0 percent) and Chicago (up 3.8 percent).

New York and Los Angeles rank one and two among the metropolitan areas surveyed in terms of sheer numbers of restaurants—10,166 and 8,830 respectively. Anchorage ranks last with only 239 outlets.

Unit growth highlights:

- Houston topped the other metropolitan areas surveyed with the most significant increase in restaurant and lunchroom establishment growth between 1977 and 1982—advancing 25.8 percent.
- Other areas reporting above average gains in restaurant and lunchroom units include Atlanta (up 20.9 percent), Honolulu (up 19.8 percent), Denver (up 18.2 percent) and San Diego (up 16.9 percent).
- The number of full service outlets fell a substantial 4.7 percent in New York during the five years between 1977 and 1982. Additionally, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Buffalo and Chicago also reported a decline in full service restaurant establishments.
- Between 1977 and 1982, the number of fast food outlets advanced at the fastest rate in Seattle, climbing 45.7 percent. San Diego posted the second highest increase, with the number of units jumping 35.6 percent. Miami came third with a 34.2 percent gain.
- Boston recorded the smallest advance in fast food unit growth, increasing a modest 5.6 percent. Other cities posting below-average fast food unit gains include New York (6.2 percent) and Cleveland (11.5 percent).

Strong eating place sales . . .

Twelve of the examined metropolitan areas posted above-average increases in eating place sales between 1977 and 1982, with Southern and Western cities recording the most notable gains. In particular, eating place sales more than doubled in Anchorage, advancing 121.7 percent. Close behind were Houston (up 119.0 percent), Dallas (up 104.8 percent) and Denver (up 100.4 percent).

In contrast, the smallest gains in eating place sales occurred in Eastern and Midwestern areas. Detroit posted the lowest advance, climbing only 48.2 percent. Not much better were Chicago (up 49.6 percent), Buffalo (up 52.1 percent), St. Louis (up 53.8 percent) and Philadelphia (up 54.5 percent).

Three of the metro areas surveyed have total restaurant sales exceeding $3.0 billion. These are Los Angeles ($3.9 billion), New York ($3.8 billion) and Chicago ($3.2 billion).

Sales highlights:

- Houston ranked first in terms of restaurant and lunchroom sales growth, leaping a whopping 132.6 percent. Dallas was second (117.7 percent) and Denver placed third (104.3 percent).
- The smallest gain in restaurant and lunchroom sales occurred in Buffalo, up 42.3 percent.
- Other cities reporting smaller than average advances in restaurant and lunchroom sales include St. Louis (up 45.8 percent), Detroit (up 48.3 percent), Chicago (up 49.8 percent) and Philadelphia (up 50.0 percent).
- Between 1977 and 1982, fast food sales more than doubled in Denver, jumping 108.2 percent. Quick service restaurant sales in Dallas and Miami also recorded outstanding gains, up 106.6 percent and 102.0 percent, respectively.
- New York recorded the smallest advance in refreshment place sales, climbing a mere 39.6 percent. Other cities posting lower than average fast food sales gains were Baltimore (up 54.2 percent), San Francisco (up 56.8 percent), Chicago (up 57.4 percent) and Detroit (up 58.4 percent).

—Susan Adelman

Eating place sales and establishments by metropolitan area 1977 vs. 1982

Metropolitan area	Number of establishments 1977	1982	Percent change 77 to 82	Sales* (000) 1977	1982	Percent change 77 to 82
Anchorage, AK						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	N/A	N/A	–	N/A	N/A	–
Refreshment places	N/A	N/A	–	N/A	N/A	–
Total eating places	197	239	21.3%	$ 85,097	$ 188,658	121.7%
Atlanta, GA						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	814	984	20.9%	$ 240,340	$ 462,631	92.5%
Refreshment places	942	1,254	33.1	262,687	521,309	98.4
Total eating places	2,000	2,508	25.4%	$ 594,672	$1,132,562	90.4%
Baltimore, MD						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	777	786	1.2%	$ 223,765	$ 375,420	67.8%
Refreshment places	875	1,081	23.5	229,027	353,101	54.2
Total eating places	1,988	2,135	7.4%	$ 549,213	$ 871,706	58.7%
Boston, MA						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,371	1,563	14.0%	$ 489,382	$ 915,068	87.0%
Refreshment places	1,171	1,237	5.6	232,601	393,473	69.2
Total eating places	3,162	3,390	7.2%	$ 889,008	$1,568,873	76.5%
Buffalo, NY						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	749	737	–1.6%	$ 159,161	$ 226,479	42.3%
Refreshment places	509	600	17.9	90,869	150,746	65.9
Total eating places	1,460	1,539	5.4%	$ 291,037	$ 442,674	52.1%
Chicago, IL						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	3,600	3,593	–0.2%	$1,141,500	$1,710,503	49.8%
Refreshment places	2,764	3,140	13.6	693,905	1,092,487	57.4
Total eating places	7,340	7,623	3.8%	$2,109,108	$3,155,278	49.6%
Cincinnati, OH						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	620	675	8.9%	$ 196,716	$ 320,123	62.7%
Refreshment places	601	674	12.1	163,183	258,736	58.6
Total eating places	1,416	1,522	7.5%	$ 411,904	$ 648,035	57.3%
Cleveland, OH						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	916	886	–3.3%	$ 268,172	$ 407,403	51.9%
Refreshment places	706	787	11.5	167,539	290,699	73.5
Total eating places	1,920	1,957	1.9%	$ 494,579	$ 776,024	56.9%
Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,236	1,398	13.1%	$ 345,495	$ 752,080	117.7%
Refreshment places	1,596	1,984	24.3	346,051	714,933	106.6
Total eating places	3,248	3,794	16.8%	$ 846,787	$1,734,699	104.8%
Denver, CO						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	936	1,106	18.2%	$ 291,877	$ 596,346	104.3%
Refreshment places	622	804	29.3	149,673	311,641	108.2
Total eating places	1,757	2,124	20.9%	$ 517,910	$1,037,954	100.4%
Detroit, MI						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,845	1,936	4.9%	$ 580,223	$ 860,443	48.3%
Refreshment places	1,538	1,746	13.5	387,739	614,013	58.4
Total eating places	3,939	4,225	7.3%	$1,120,490	$1,660,066	48.2%
Honolulu, HI						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	464	556	19.8%	$ 193,772	$ 352,109	81.7%
Refreshment places	350	419	19.7	117,405	215,600	83.6
Total eating places	902	1,079	19.6%	$ 346,073	$ 640,929	85.2%
Houston, TX						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,094	1,376	25.8%	$ 336,598	$ 782,820	132.6%
Refreshment places	1,359	1,613	18.7	332,691	654,330	96.7
Total eating places	2,715	3,302	21.6%	$ 775,288	$1,698,240	119.0%
Kansas City, MO–KS						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	635	636	0.2%	$ 176,151	$ 290,422	64.9%
Refreshment places	646	734	13.6	164,623	276,046	67.7
Total eating places	1,448	1,530	5.7%	$ 394,362	$ 625,761	58.7%

Metropolitan area	Number of establishments 1977	1982	Percent change 77 to 82	Sales* (000) 1977	1982	Percent change 77 to 82
Los Angeles, CA						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	4,141	4,188	1.1%	$ 1,408,906	$ 2,256,485	60.2%
Refreshment places	3,426	3,851	12.4	742,336	1,284,238	73.0
Total eating places	8,310	8,830	6.2%	$ 2,359,120	$ 3,924,838	66.4%
Miami, FL						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	849	879	3.5%	$ 285,595	$ 451,460	58.1%
Refreshment places	562	754	34.2	134,495	271,748	102.0
Total eating places	1,610	1,874	16.4%	$ 493,126	$ 843,997	71.2%
Milwaukee, WI						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	773	802	3.8%	$ 215,712	$ 333,480	54.6%
Refreshment places	453	574	26.7	112,866	200,529	77.7
Total eating places	1,389	1,526	9.9%	$ 360,705	$ 581,116	61.1%
Minneapolis, MN						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	928	1,062	14.4%	$ 326,154	$ 572,412	75.5%
Refreshment places	718	916	27.6	178,940	313,354	75.1
Total eating places	1,881	2,246	19.4%	$ 548,500	$ 975,232	77.8%
New York, NY						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	5,525	5,264	-4.7%	$ 1,394,510	$ 2,239,993	60.6%
Refreshment places	3,332	3,539	6.2	630,323	880,187	39.6
Total eating places	10,289	10,166	-1.2%	$ 2,435,909	$ 3,833,264	57.4%
Philadelphia, PA						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,977	1,930	-2.4%	$ 551,847	$ 827,674	50.0%
Refreshment places	1,591	1,780	11.9	340,044	548,449	61.3
Total eating places	4,261	4,346	2.0%	$ 1,046,209	$ 1,616,422	54.5%
Pittsburgh, PA						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	970	1,032	6.4%	$ 265,242	$ 437,401	64.9%
Refreshment places	725	859	18.5	150,013	273,932	82.6
Total eating places	2,002	2,155	7.6%	$ 484,971	$ 813,837	67.8%
Portland, OR						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	694	793	14.3%	$ 231,052	$ 376,954	63.1%
Refreshment places	509	634	24.6	124,831	215,298	72.5
Total eating places	1,335	1,573	17.8%	$ 387,054	$ 647,377	67.2%
St. Louis, MO						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	972	982	1.0%	$ 273,052	$ 398,097	45.8%
Refreshment places	923	1,103	19.5	252,194	439,905	74.4
Total eating places	2,253	2,469	9.6%	$ 609,201	$ 936,986	53.8%
San Diego, CA						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,005	1,174	16.9%	$ 297,647	$ 560,719	88.4%
Refreshment places	739	1,002	35.6	185,134	331,359	79.0
Total eating places	1,881	2,370	26.0%	$ 506,746	$ 972,212	91.8%
San Francisco, CA						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	2,241	2,555	14.0%	$ 729,261	$ 1,218,689	67.1%
Refreshment places	1,502	1,795	19.5	330,689	518,683	56.8
Total eating places	4,235	4,884	15.3%	$ 1,172,830	$ 2,026,763	72.8%
Seattle, WA						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	999	1,135	13.6%	$ 360,374	$ 589,260	63.5%
Refreshment places	567	826	45.7	152,204	300,330	97.3
Total eating places	1,729	2,155	24.6%	$ 566,365	$ 1,010,723	78.4%
Washington, DC						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,386	1,535	10.8%	$ 496,407	$ 846,306	70.5%
Refreshment places	1,164	1,349	15.9	352,718	583,058	65.3
Total eating places	3,008	3,374	12.2%	$ 1,036,329	$ 1,728,653	66.8%
United States						
Restaurants & lunchrooms	118,896	122,851	3.2%	$28,470,815	$47,135,520	65.4%
Refreshment places	92,357	109,353	17.6	19,526,582	35,677,693	82.2
Total eating places	**237,726**	**258,584**	**8.4%**	**$54,405,754**	**$93,158,284**	**71.0%**

*Sales figures have not been adjusted for inflation. N/A: Not available

Source: *1977 and 1982 Census of Retail Trade*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

September–October–November

CREST Report

Percent change in quarterly traffic (fall 1983–fall 1985)

	Quarter	Percent change
1983	Fall	5.2%
1984	Winter	6.2%
	Spring	7.5%
	Summer	2.4%
	Fall	0.4%
1985	Winter	1.1%
	Spring	−1.1%
	Summer	4.0%
	Fall	−0.2%

Note: Percent change is from the same period in prior year.
Source: CREST *Household Report*, GDR/CREST Enterprises

Fall quarter traffic down 0.2 percent . . .

Customer counts at the nation's restaurants during the fall quarter fell a slight 0.2 percent. Consumers, saddled with record-high debt, cut back on spending for some goods and services, such as restaurant meals.

NRA is confident that the opening months of the new year will bring stronger growth to the restaurant industry. Real eating place sales (adjusted for inflation) are forecast to advance a healthy 3.7 percent in 1986. (For detailed information on fall quarter economic performance, please refer to the Economic Indicators report on page 44 of this issue of ***NRA NEWS***.)

Industry summary . . .

- *Customer traffic* dropped 0.2 percent. Breakfast customer counts were up, rising 4.0 percent, while lunch traffic posted a modest gain of 0.3 percent. Dinner traffic counts remained flat. Traffic during snack occasions fell slightly.
- *Sales* advanced only 0.5 percent. The slow sales growth is attributed to declining customer counts, especially in the higher-priced segments, and more deal usage.
- *Visit frequency*, the number of times households visited restaurants in an average two-week period, fell by one percent. In addition, the number of households eating out at least once in an average two-week period was down one percent.
- *Average check size* edged up a mere 0.6 percent, reaching $3.41.
- The proportion of occasions on which a *promotion* was used increased to 12.2 percent versus a lower 10.9 percent of occasions in the same quarter last year.

Quick service restaurants . . .

- *Customer traffic* was up 4.2 percent. Especially strong traffic gains at quick service ethnic restaurants (up 9.4 percent) contributed to this rise.
- *Sales* surged 6.0 percent in response to healthy traffic increases, increased visit frequency and greater penetration.
- *Visit frequency* was up 2.0 percent. Penetration—the proportion of households eating out at least once during the fall quarter—rose a slight 0.9 percent.
- *Average check size* advanced 2.1 percent, totaling $2.45.
- *Promotions* were used on 14.0 percent of occasions, compared with 12.4 percent last fall.

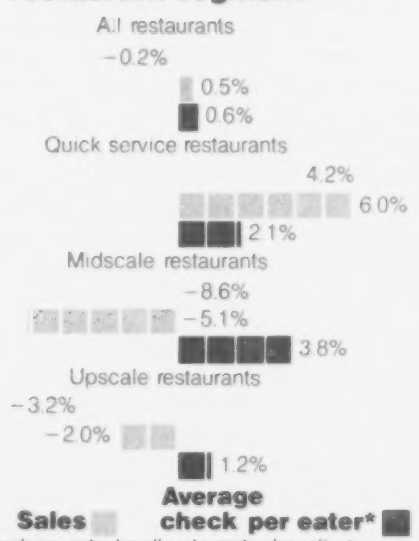
Midscale restaurants . . .

- *Customer traffic* was down 8.6 percent. The midscale hotel restaurant segment suffered a 27.9 percent traffic decline, but sizable increases in customer counts at midscale fish/seafood establishments and midscale barbeque restaurants were recorded.
- *Sales* dropped 5.1 percent due to weak traffic, lower visit frequency and a decrease in the number of households eating out.
- *Visit frequency* declined 7.2 percent. Penetration fell 4.0 percent.
- *Average check size* rose 3.8 percent to $4.04.
- *Promotions* were used on 8.9 percent of occasions, compared with 8.3 percent of occasions in the previous fall quarter.

Upscale restaurants . . .

- *Customer traffic* declined 3.2 percent. A substantial 14.1 percent traffic increase was posted at upscale specialty restaurants, with upscale steak restaurants recording especially strong traffic gains. Upscale ethnic restaurant customer counts were also up a healthy 11.3 percent due to strong growth in Italian and Asian traffic. However, upscale hotel restaurant customer counts fell 18.5 percent.
- *Sales* declined 2.0 percent in response to slow traffic, lower visit frequency and heavy promotional activity.
- *Visit frequency* was down 5.9 percent. This was accompanied by a slight 0.5 percent decline in penetration.
- *Average check size* totaled $8.68, a 1.2 percent increase over last fall.
- *Promotions* accounted for a substantial 16.7 percent of occasions, compared with 14.8 percent in the fall quarter of last year.

Fall quarter performance by restaurant segment



*The average check per eater for all restaurants also reflects information from unreported segments
Source: CREST *Household Report*, GDR/CREST Enterprises

CREST report focus

Restaurant promotions

With this quarterly CREST report, NRA inaugurates a new format for reporting restaurant industry statistics: a one-page summary of key performance measures for the most recent quarter and an in-depth analysis of a specific performance measure, which will illustrate other uses of CREST information. This month the focus is on promotional usage within the restaurant industry—when promotions are used, who uses them and what types are most popular at different kinds of restaurants. Upcoming topics will examine where meals are ordered, weekday versus weekend business and specific meal period performance.

Heightened competition within the foodservice industry has led to new promotional strategies designed to encourage consumers to try new menu items and new restaurant concepts and also to build customer traffic and loyalty.

Although coupons continue to be the most popular type of promotion offered, many restaurateurs are opting for alternatives. According to CREST, 42 percent of all restaurant promotions used by patrons in the summer of 1985 involved coupons, down from 51 percent in the summer of 1982. On the other hand, the proportion of special event promotions, including grand openings and holiday celebrations, increased during this time period from 19 percent of deal-related occasions to 24 percent. Also the percent of occasions using "meal deals" (full meals priced less than items purchased a la carte) rose to 23 percent in the summer of 1985 from 20 percent in the summer of 1982.

Majority take advantage of restaurant deals . . .

NRA research has shown that a majority of consumers take advantage of special deals offered by restaurants. A 1982 survey, *Consumer Reactions to and Use of Restaurant Promotions*, revealed that seven out of 10 individuals used a promotion on at least one restaurant visit in the past year, and four out of 10 reported they used a special deal once a month or more often.

According to CREST's *Family Report*,* in 1977 only 6.5 percent of all restaurant visits involved some type of promotion. By 1984, the proportion of occasions on which a deal was used had risen to 11.3 percent.

Certain demographic groups are more likely than others to use a deal when dining away from home. Restaurant promotions are especially appealing to households with children. They tend to take advantage of these incentives to treat themselves to an economical meal out. NRA's 1982 promotion study revealed that, on average, 75 percent of the households with four or more members used a restaurant promotion on at least one visit in the prior year compared with a lower 67 percent of two-member households.

According to CREST's 1984 *Household Report*, during an average two-week period approximately two out of 10 (17.8 percent) restaurant parties of adults and two or more children in both the under-12 age bracket and 13-to-17-year age bracket involved some type of promotion. Parties of adults and one child under 12 years of age were also likely to take advantage of promotions, using special deals on 15.1 percent of all restaurant visits in an average two-week period.

In comparison, children under 18 years of age, visiting a restaurant without their parents or some other adult, used promotions on less than one out of 10 (8.8 percent) occasions. Further, fewer than 10 percent of the restaurant visits where only adults were present involved a deal. Of course, part of the reason why parties with children are more likely to use a promotion when visiting a restaurant than are parties with adults only is that the former are more likely to patronize fast food restaurants.

Other groups that tend to frequently take advantage of restaurant promotions include

- women
- households with a working wife or mother
- 18 to 24-year olds
- households with incomes between $15,000 and $19,999
- households with incomes between $30,000 and $34,999
- singles and
- Southerners.

Seasonal influences on promotional activity . . .

Promotional usage in the restaurant industry fluctuates from season to season. Because traffic counts are lowest during the winter months, restaurateurs more actively promote their establishments and products during December, January and February to give consumers additional incentive to venture outside their homes. In the warm summer months when many families are vacationing, traffic and sales are at their highest levels, and operators feel less need to offer deals.

The year just past is a

Customer use of restaurant promotions

Frequency of use	Percent of respondents
Four or more times a month	8.5%
Two or three times a month	14.7%
Once a month	17.4%
Once every other month	9.5%
Once every six months	13.1%
Once a year	8.5%
Never	28.3%

Source: *Consumer Reactions to and Use of Restaurant Promotions*, National Restaurant Association, March 1982.

**Information from the CREST* Family Report *is used in this analysis to highlight ongoing trends in promotional usage. CREST* Household Report *data are used to illuminate current promotional activity in the restaurant industry.*

good example of this seasonal pattern. In the winter quarter of 1985, more than one out of 10 (11.7 percent) restaurant occasions in a typical two-week period involved some type of deal versus a lower 10.4 percent of occasions in the summer. The proportion of restaurant visits on which a promotion was used in the spring was 11.1 percent—down from the number of winter quarter promotional visits but higher than summer promotional usage. The proportion of promotional visits in the fall was 12.2 percent.

The influences of the economy . . .

The economic climate also influences consumer deal usage. During periods of slow and lagging economic growth, consumers are more apt to use promotions, and operators are more inclined to offer them. The recession in the early part of this decade is an example. Promotional usage in 1981 was up 13.0 percent over 1980 levels, but in 1982 the number of restaurant visits involving a deal climbed a whopping 19.9 percent over the previous year.

The rate of increase in promotional usage began to taper off as the economy started its comeback in 1983. The number of restaurant visits on which a deal was used advanced a lower 5.0 percent over the 1982 level. In 1984, at the height of the economic recovery, the number of occasions on which a deal was used climbed 8.3 percent, but much of this increase can be attributed to Olympic game promotions.

More recently, promotional usage has been gradually inching upwards in response to the economic slowdown experienced during the first two quarters of 1985. The number of restaurant visits involving a special incentive increased 0.9 percent in the winter quarter of 1985 over 1984 levels. And in the spring and summer, promotional visits at restaurants jumped 9.8 percent and 5.8 percent, respectively, over the same quarters in the prior year. The rate of increase in promotional usage may taper off in 1986 as the economy rebounds from sluggish growth in 1985.

What types of promotions are used where . . .

A higher than average proportion of quick service restaurant visits involved promotions in 1984. According to CREST's *Household Report*, in an average two-week period in 1984, 12.1 percent of quick service restaurant visits involved some type of promotion, compared with 10.5 percent for all restaurants.

Coupons were the number one promotion used by fast food patrons in 1984. In fact, customers used coupons more often at quick service restaurants than at any other type of restaurant. According to CREST, in 1984 coupons represented more than half (51.2 percent) of all promotional occasions at fast food restaurants, compared with a lower 43.8 percent for restaurants overall. However, fast food's dependence on coupons is tapering off. In the summer of 1985, 47 percent of the deal occasions involved a coupon, down from 62 percent in the winter of 1982. Quick service operators have come to rely a little more on other kinds of promotions such as "meal deals." The proportion for this kind of deal occasion rose to 24 percent in the summer versus 16.7 in the winter of 1982.

Both the upscale and midscale segments reported comparatively less promotional activity in 1984. Less than one out of 10 (8.7 percent) upscale restaurant occasions in an average two-week period and a similar proportion (8.1 percent) of midscale establishment visits involved a special incentive.

Holiday or special event promotions, such as New Year's Eve specials and sweetheart suppers on Valentine's Day, are particularly appealing to customers of upscale establishments. More than one-third (35.6 percent) of all upscale restaurant promotional visits in 1984 involved special event celebrations. In comparison, a lower two out of 10 (23.8 percent) promotional occasions at all restaurants involved special event offerings.

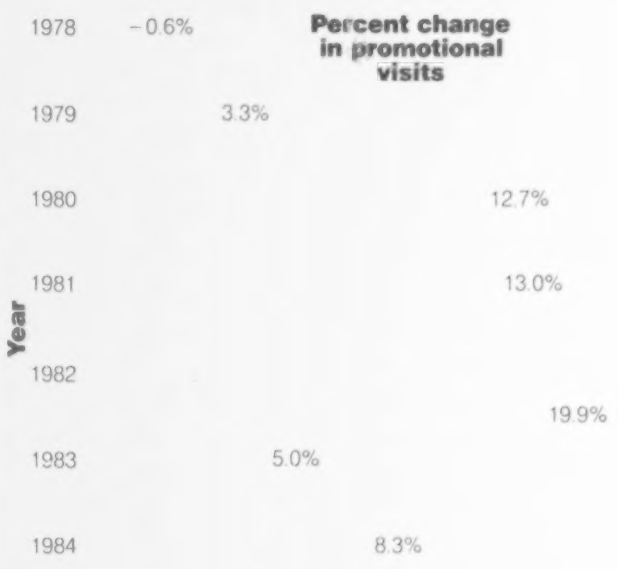
Other types of promotions, which include tie-in purchases, such as a free glass of wine with dinner, are also popular at upscale eateries. They accounted for one out of three promotional visits at these establishments in 1984.

Midscale restaurant patrons used special event promotions more frequently than any other type of promotion in 1984. Four out of 10 promotional visits to midscale restaurants involved a special event deal, considerably above the 23.8 percent average for all restaurants. Reduced price incentives were favored the least, used on only 9.8 percent of all deal occasions at these establishments.

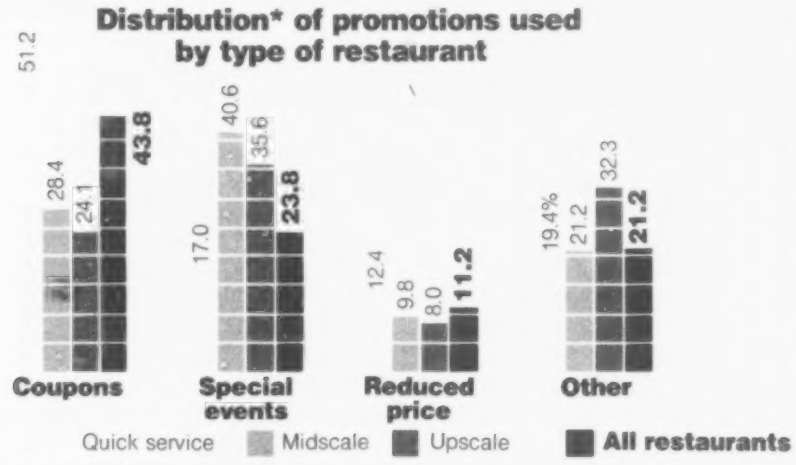
When are promotions used . . .

Restaurateurs have found that promotions are useful when attempting to build traffic during weak or "new" meal periods. For example, during the past several years many establishments have increased promotional offerings during breakfast to penetrate this relatively new market. According to CREST's *Family Report*, the proportion of occasions on which a deal was used during the breakfast period doubled in the past eight years—from 4.7 percent of breakfast occasions in 1977 to 9.3 per-

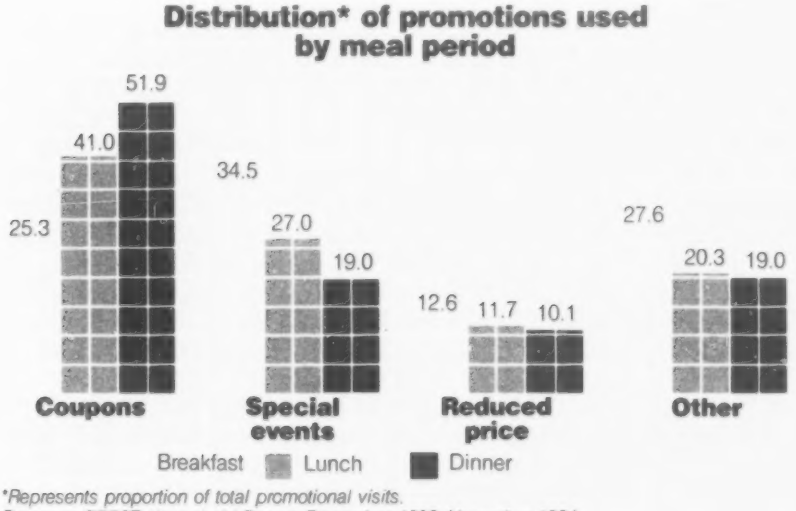
Percent change in restaurant industry deal usage



Source: CREST *Family Report*, September 1976–August 1984



*Represents proportion of total promotional visits.
Source: CREST *Household Report*, December 1983–November 1984.



*Represents proportion of total promotional visits.
Source: CREST *Household Report*, December 1983–November 1984.

What is CREST?

Launched in September 1975, the CREST (Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends) survey is designed to track expenditures and behavior in the commercial segment of the foodservice industry, including information by type and classification of restaurant and also by meal or snack period.

Approximately 10,000 families and 2,800 non-family households representing demographic patterns in the U.S. have been selected to participate in the study. Each household is asked to record every meal and snack experience during a particular two-week period for each of the four quarters of the year. Detailed entries are required for meals eaten or purchased away from home in establishments such as restaurants, hotels and motels, fast food/drive-ins, delicatessens, refreshment stands, carryouts, coffee shops, donut shops, ice cream shops or eating places inside variety stores or other retail stores. The diary does not include any meals eaten at schools, hospitals, colleges or other institutional feeding places.

CREST information can help restaurateurs compare their operation's performance with that of the total industry as well as with specific restaurant categories (quickservice, midscale or upscale restaurants).

The CREST study can also provide valuable information concerning customer behavior, such as how much people spend. And, because it is an ongoing study, CREST information allows comparison against a standard—an aid in the development of trend analysis.

Readers wishing more information on the CREST study should contact GDR/CREST Enterprises, one of the NPD group of marketing and research companies, 1300 W. Higgins Road, Park Ridge, IL 60068-5798.

cent of occasions in 1984. Total traffic during this period, thanks in part to the greater availability of special deals as well as to more quick service outlets offering morning meals, jumped a substantial 56.7 percent.

Nonetheless, the dinner meal is the leader in promotional activity. According to CREST's 1984 *Household Report*, the largest proportion (14.5 percent) of restaurant visits involving an incentive occurred during dinner.

During dinner, coupons were the most popular incentive, accounting for more than half the total promotional visits. Special event incentives, such as those promoting holidays, and other types of promotions, such as "meal deals" or free wine with dinner, each accounted for 19.0 percent of all dinners involving a promotion.

Less than one out of 10 (9.4 percent) restaurant visits at lunch involved a promotion. Coupons were used most frequently during this meal period (41.0 percent of all promotional occasions), followed by special event incentives (27.0 percent).

An incentive . . .

Promotions are popular tools used by operators to combat the sometimes negative effect the economy and the seasons have on their business. In addition, special incentives are useful to revive ailing traffic counts to increase awareness of certain meal periods and to encourage hesitant customers to try new products. They can be good business as long as operators remember that what works well for one may not work well for another. The type of restaurant, the meal period and the customer base should all be examined before implementing a promotional strategy.

—Sallie Adams

Crest data

Modest industry gains in 1985

This article highlights the results of CREST's (Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends) Annual Household Report. *The information covers the 12-month period from December 1984 through November 1985.*

The restaurant industry grew at a modest pace in 1985. Customer counts at the nation's restaurants rose 1.0 percent and sales climbed 3.1 percent. The economy, fueled by a relatively low inflation rate, moderate unemployment and upbeat consumer confidence, continued to expand but at a slower rate than in prior years.

Traffic up slightly . . .

Traffic advanced 1.0 percent in 1985 versus stronger gains of 4.0 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively, in 1984 and 1983. The most substantial increase occurred during the summer months—up 4.0 percent. Traffic also rose in the winter period, advancing a somewhat smaller 1.1 percent. The spring and fall months, however, recorded a more disappointing performance. Customer counts fell 1.1 percent and 0.4 percent, respectively.

Traffic highlights

- Traffic at quick service restaurants made the most significant advance in 1985, climbing 4.4 percent. This increase is slightly below the 4.6 percent gain posted in 1984 and higher than the 4.2 percent increase in 1983.
- Both upscale and midscale establishments experienced declining customer counts in 1985. Traffic at upscale restaurants edged down 1.8 percent versus gains of 4.4 percent and 5.4 percent, respectively, in 1984 and 1983. Midscale restaurant traffic fell 5.2 percent, compared to a 2.5 percent advance in 1984.
- Breakfast was the fastest-growing meal period again last year, with traffic jumping 7.8 percent. This increase is somewhat slower than the 10.7 percent rise reported in 1984.
- Traffic at the evening meal inched up 0.1 percent. This is well below the 5.6 percent increase posted in 1984.
- Lunch traffic dipped slightly in 1985, down 0.7 percent—a contrast to the stronger 3.6 percent gain in 1984.
- Customers dined out more often in 1985. Visit frequency—the average number of times families and singles visited restaurants—climbed 1.2 percent, slightly below the 2.0 percent advance registered in 1984 but well above the 0.4 percent gain in 1983.
- The actual number of households that dined out at least once in any typical two-week period—restaurant penetration—declined last year to 77.8 percent from 78.6 percent in 1984.
- The average party size remained at 1.79 people per visit.

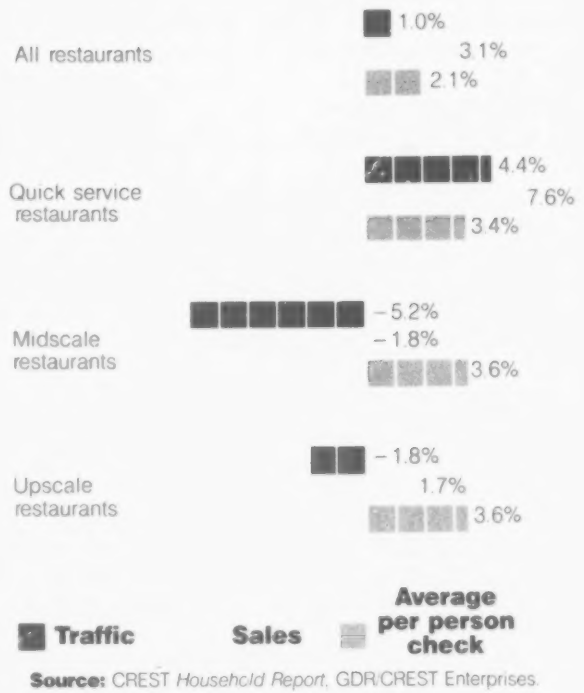
Restaurant sales advance 3.1 percent . . .

Restaurant sales increased 3.1 percent in 1985. In comparison, sales jumped a more substantial 7.8 percent in 1984 and 5.2 percent in 1983. During the June-July-August period, sales climbed 6.2 percent, outdistancing the other quarters. The winter months registered the second best performance, up 4.7 percent, while the spring and fall quarters experienced sluggish sales growth of 0.9 percent and 0.5 percent, respectively.

Sales highlights

- Quick service restaurants ranked first in terms of sales growth in 1985, advancing an impressive 7.6 percent. This compares with a higher 10.1 percent increase in 1984 and a 9.2 percent gain in 1983.
- Sales at upscale establishments rose 1.7 percent last year versus a larger 6.8 percent increase the year before.
- Sales at midscale restaurants dipped 1.8 percent in 1985. In comparison, sales rose 5.6 percent in 1984.
- Sales for the morning meal made the most significant advance in 1985—rising 7.4 percent. However, this increase is somewhat below the 13.3 percent and 13.4 percent gains posted in 1984 and 1983, respectively.
- Dinner sales climbed 3.0 percent last year, and sales for lunch rose a more modest 1.4 percent.
- The average expenditure for a restaurant meal or snack—per person check—increased 2.1 percent to $3.41 in 1985.
- Both midscale and upscale establishments experienced a 3.6 percent rise in average per person check last year. Upscale restaurants recorded the highest per person check—$8.73 per person.
- The average per person check for breakfast advanced 3.4 percent to $2.41.

Performance by restaurant segment (1985)

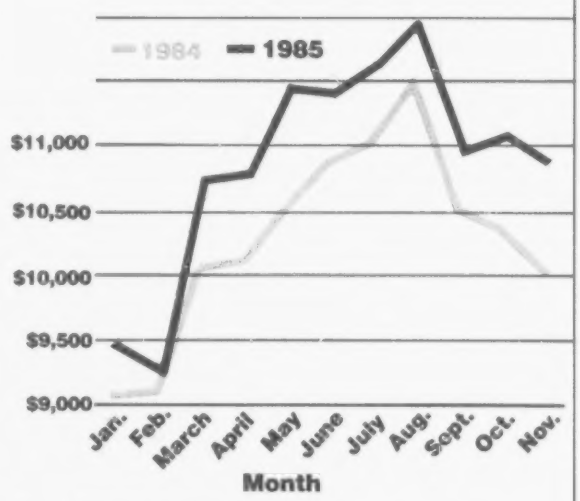


Source: CREST *Household Report*, GDR/CREST Enterprises.

Industry indicators

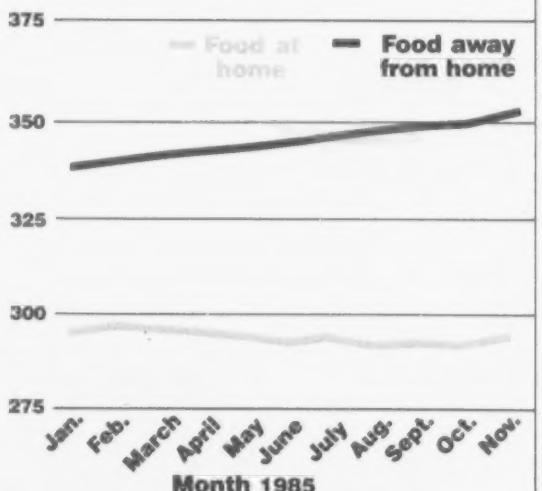
Changes in the economy directly influence restaurant industry performance. To help restaurateurs keep track of these changes, the National Restaurant Association periodically publishes this report.

Eating and drinking place sales (in billions of dollars)



Note: Figures subject to revision.
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food at home vs. food away from home



Note: 1967 = 100
Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Industry index

Retail sales (millions)	Nov. 1985	Percent change*	Year-to-date Nov. 1985	Percent change*
All retailers	$118,959	4.8%	$1,238,535	6.3%
Eating and drinking places	$ 10,896	8.0%	$ 119,789	5.5%
Food stores	$ 24,208	6.4%	$ 255,970	4.2%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Consumer prices (Nov. 1985)	Percent change*	Percent change year-to-date*
Food away from home	4.0%	4.0%
Food at home	1.4%	1.4%
All items less food	3.9%	3.8%
All items	3.6%	3.5%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Eating place sales (millions)	Oct. 1985	Percent change*	Year-to-date Sept. 1985	Percent change*
Eating place sales	$ 10,376	8.2%	$100,903	5.8%
Real eating place sales	–	4.1%	–	1.9%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; NRA.

Employment and earnings	Sept. 1985	Percent change*
Total eating and drinking place employment	5,922.6**	9.4%
Nonsupervisory employment	5,390.6**	8.7%
Average weekly hours	25.8	–2.3%
Average hourly earnings	$4.37	0.9%
Average weekly earnings	$112.75	–1.4%

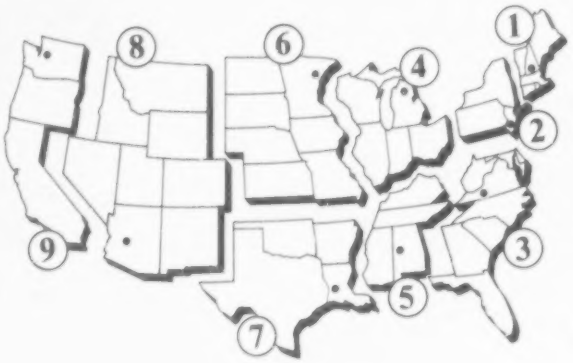
Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
**Percent change is from prior year.*
***Thousands.*
Note: Figures subject to revision.

Other economic indicators

	1985 Quarter or month	Percent change
Real Gross National Product	III	3.2%
	IV	3.0%
Personal income	September	0.4%
	October	0.5%
	November	0.6%
Disposable personal income	September	0.2%
	October	0.5%
	November	0.5%
Personal consumption expenditures	September	1.2%
	October	–1.4%
	November	0.8%
Civilian unemployment rate*	September	7.1%
	October	7.1%
	November	7.0%

**Percentage indicates actual unemployment rate.*
Note: Figures subject to revision.
Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

by Anne Papa



1

Location: Hancock, NH
NRA member: Pat Wells
Operation: John Hancock Inn
Profile: Country inn
In business: 13 years
Seats: 70
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner, Sunday brunch

On a typical Wednesday afternoon at the John Hancock Inn, a local group of 70-year-old men gather to play bridge in the colonial-style restaurant. Later that evening owner **Pat Wells** may offer to babysit the children of one of her waitresses.

"That's the way the inn works. We take care of people, and they take care of us," explains Wells. She says that residents and businesses in the small town of Hancock (population 1,000) and surrounding towns are extremely supportive of one another, which is why business continues to flourish at the inn. "We do a steady lunch business," Wells reports. "During the winter, when dinner business is slightly off, people make a point of coming in for dinner, not only because they enjoy our food and atmosphere but to help us out as well."

Dinner guests at the Hancock Inn order the house specialty, prime rib, but there are many seafood and poultry items to choose from as well.

2

Location: Cherry Hill, NJ
RA member: Gloria Bryen
Operation: The Hideaway Restaurant
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 25 years
Seats: 350
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Location is key to the growing success of the Hideaway Restaurant, says owner **Gloria Bryen.** Not only does the restaurant attract travellers going to and from south Jersey's seaside resorts but it also draws customers from nearby Philadelphia. An influx of people moving into Cherry Hill has also meant many new customers for the Hideaway.

Bryen says customers keep coming back to the Hideaway because of the extra touches added to the menu and decor. "We employ two French chefs who take every advantage of new, exciting trends," she explains. Currently, 13 to 18 specials are offered nightly in addition to the 30-item menu. The emphasis is on fresh fish, vegetables and game.

The restaurant's elegant decor is enhanced by exotic fresh flowers, many of which Bryen says are virtually impossible to find anywhere else. "It took a great deal of research to locate some of the more exotic varieties," she confides.

3

Location: Blacksburg, VA
NRA member: Thor A. Kritsky
Operation: Top of the Stairs
Profile: College pub
In business: 9 years
Seats: 125
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

As long as students continue to attend Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Top of the Stairs will never do a bad day of business, according to owner **Thor Kritsky.** With students representing 85 percent of his clientele, Kritsky boasts, "We're a Virginia Tech institution. Top of the Stairs is the first place students come for a study break."

Top of the Stairs is, appropriately enough, at the top of a flight of stairs, occupying the second story of an old Victorian home. The house specialty is overstuffed sandwiches with outlandish names, such as "Gobbler in the Slaw" (turkey and cole slaw), named after the Virginia Tech "Fightin' Gobbler" mascot.

4

Location: Grosse Pointe, MI
NRA member: Diamond Phillips
Operation: The Old Place
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 52 years
Seats: 250
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"You've got to roll with the times," says **Diamond Phillips,** owner of The Old Place, explaining how his restaurant has survived more than half a century in business. Certainly, if Phillips had let his business fluctuate with the state of the economy in nearby Detroit—up one minute, down the next—he might have closed The Old Place long ago.

But consistent quality, as well as constant evaluation and updates, have made The Old Place an institution among affluent Grosse Pointe residents. Phillips says his main competition are the many private elegant clubs that operate in this fashionable Detroit suburb. So he strives to "meet them in their territory" by staying on his toes to please customers. The cuisine at The Old Place is indicative of his efforts. "In the time we've been in business, we've gone from hearty French to haute cuisine to beyond nouvelle to please the changing tastes of our clientele."

5

Location: Tuscaloosa, AL
NRA member: Drew Henson
Operation: Henson's Cypress Inn
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 2 years
Seats: 311
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Weekday business at Henson's Cypress Inn is slightly better than it was last year, but weekends are down, according to owner **Drew Henson.** He speculates that a small amount of expendable income among Tuscaloosa residents—"the average Joe can't afford to eat out like he used to"—accounts for the lag in weekend business.

However, all things considered, Henson is pleased with his operation's success after only two years in business. Located so close to Tuscaloosa's Black Warrior River that "you could stick a pole out of the windows and fish," Henson's Cypress Inn is a rustic, provincial restaurant, complete with a tin roof, hardwood floors and "good old American food." The menu emphasizes seafood of all types, with fresh snapper as a clear favorite. Catfish and oysters run a close second.

6

Location: Duluth, MN
NRA member: Joel F. Berg
Operation: Lemon Drop Restaurant
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 25 years
Seats: 128
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Conditions in Duluth are extremely harsh this winter, according to **Joel Berg,** manager of the Lemon Drop Restaurant. In addition to bitterly cold weather, Duluth's economy is suffering because many of the mines just north of town are shutting down. Consequently, the mining support industries based in Duluth are facing hard times.

But Berg is optimistic about business at the Lemon Drop. "Tourism is growing rapidly in Duluth," he says, "which is good for us because we're located right on Lake Superior." And even though most tourists come through during the spring and summer fishing season, Berg maintains steady business in the family restaurant during the winter by offering specials, such as an all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet on weekdays, designed to lure business people on their way to work. A house specialty, Walleye Pike pulled fresh from the waters of Lake Superior, is a popular favorite all year round.

7

Location: Natchitoches, LA
NRA member: Joe Nichols
Operation: Mariners' Seafood & Steakhouse
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 3 years
Seats: 150
Meals served: Dinner

Business has not been good at Mariners' Seafood & Steakhouse ever since **Joe Nichols** purchased the restaurant three years ago. The combined evils of beetle infestation in the timber industry and the nationwide crisis in the farming industry have hit this rural Louisiana community hard. "We've never been able to rise from the 1982 recession," laments Nichols. And 1986 thus far does not look any better; Nichols reports business at the restaurant has dropped since the first of the year.

Mariners' Seafood & Steakhouse is built on piling in the middle of Natchitoches' Sibley Lake, so customers cross a 50-foot walkway to get to the front entrance. Huge glass windows in the dining room provide a commanding lake view from every table. As the restaurant's name implies, house specialties are steaks and fresh seafood. Nichols hopes the quality of the food served at Mariners' will mean a reversal in business during the months ahead.

8

Location: Mesa, AZ
NRA member: Phillip Mardirossian
Operation: Butch O'Leary's
Profile: Casual theme restaurant
In business: 4 years
Seats: 250
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Competition is fierce within a half-mile radius of Butch O'Leary's. "Every major chain in Mesa seems to be at our intersection," maintains owner **Phillip Mardirossian.** "We're the only independent in a cluster of restaurants."

So Mardirossian has to try harder to capture a share of the Mesa market—and he does. "We describe our marketing stategy as 'guerilla warfare,'" he says. "We identify which competitor has the customers we want, then we do what we can to take them away." For instance, although Butch O'Leary's is like many casual restaurants with ferns, brass and an extensive menu suitable for snacking or dining, Mardirossian has upscaled his concept somewhat by adding pricier menu items, such as lobster tails and prime rib. He believes his efforts have paid off, with early 1986 sales equalling last year's figures. Many of his competitors, he explains, are experiencing a decline in sales this year.

9

Location: Seattle, WA
NRA member: Kim Whittle
Operation: Hiram's at the Locks
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 10 years
Seats: 175
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, Sunday brunch

"Business gets better every year," says **Kim Whittle,** manager of Hiram's at the Locks. "The longer we're in business, the better our reputation gets." Whittle adds that the strength of the economy in Seattle is also contributing to the restaurant's prosperity.

Whittle describes Hiram's at the Locks as a "special occasion" place, ideal for birthday or anniversary celebrations, senior prom dinners and other special occasions. The restaurant is located at the exact point where Seattle's locks pass from fresh to salt water, so many commercial and pleasure boats can be seen drifting past the restaurant's windows. The house specialty is—of course—seafood, although steak and pasta dishes are also included on the menu.

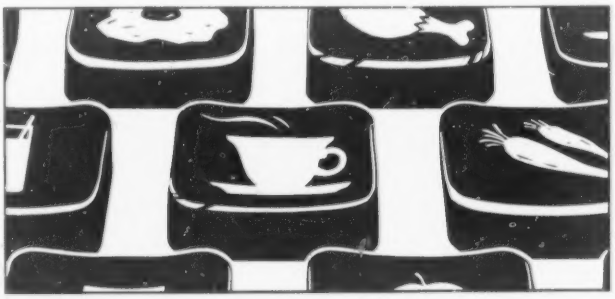
To boost business during the winter months, Hiram's at the Locks features a Maine lobster special, offering a complete meal for one low price. "People here love Maine lobster every bit as much as in New England," reports Whittle.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

May I—beep—take your order please—beep?

Monty Carlton, owner of the Roundup Coffee Shop in Cedar Ridge, CA, hasn't had a single waiter or waitress call in sick for the past three months.

Instead of hiring humans to wait tables in his restaurant, Carlton relies on computers to do the work. Each table at the Roundup is equipped with a video screen through which customers are able to access breakfast, lunch or dinner menus. A couple of button pushes and customer orders are zipped through wires and into the kitchen where Carlton does the cooking.



The computer automatically totals the check as soon as an order is placed.

Carlton believes his computer system is more efficient than human help, and he also says the system is saving money. "With employees I was paying workman's compensation, insurance and overtime," he explains. "It won't be long before my computer system pays for itself." He does acknowledge, however, that some customers are reluctant to use the system. So customers at the Roundup are given a choice—either they place their order by computer or they wait until Carlton can get away from the kitchen to wait on them personally.

—The Union, Grass Valley—Nevada City, CA

Fancy foods, naturally

Chili sauce with miso. Passion fruit sorbet. Cranberry sauce with whole cranberries and white grape juice. Are these foods tasty gourmet treats or are they "health" foods?

These products—all of which would be right at home on the shelves of any gourmet shop—were recently displayed at a natural foods convention held in Washington, DC.

More and more, purveyors of both gourmet and natural foods are recognizing that there is, as one gourmet food producer says, "a natural bridge between our two industries." Consumers who are interested in gourmet foods are also likely to be looking for foods that are good for them. Therefore, many enterprising purveyors are marketing their products as being both gourmet *and* natural.

—New York Times

Tex-Mex on the Sienne

Each year in Paris, the International Action Committee for Gastronomy and Tourism awards the prestigious Plat Vermeil (Gold-Plated Dish) to the best foreign restaurant in the city. This year the distinction goes to the first American restaurant ever to receive the award.

The winner? Papa Maya, a Tex-Mex restaurant recently opened near Les Halles. Papa Maya is one of half a dozen Tex-Mex establishments opened in Paris in recent years—proof that the Tex-Mex craze has indeed crossed the Atlantic.

Teresa Gonzales, co-owner of Papa Maya, says cooking Tex-Mex in Paris is not easy. "Virtually all ingredients, except corn tortillas, which are manufactured in the Netherlands, must be imported from the United States," she says. But judging from the restaurant's popularity, the trouble is worth it. Tex-Mex may soon rival "les hamburgers" and "les chiens chauds" (hot dogs) as the most popular type of American food in Paris.

—New York Times

Flipping over flapjacks

In 1958, the first International House of Pancakes (IHOP) opened with 48 different pancake varieties on its menu. Gradually, a downswing in the popularity of pancakes trimmed the menu to 16 varieties.

But things are flipping over for flapjacks.

Today, thanks to a big upturn in sales, IHOP is serving its first new pancake variety in 25 years—"The Super-Amazin' Cinnamon Raisin Pancake." And there's more to come, with two classic varieties—Banana Nut and Iowa Corn Pancakes—to return to the menu in 1986.

It seems that baby boomers have rediscovered the all-American breakfast favorite. "Kids who ate pancakes at IHOP when they were young have grown up and still love pancakes," says Bob Rosenberg, operator of three Southern California IHOPS. "And so do *their* kids."

—USA TODAY

National Restaurant Association's

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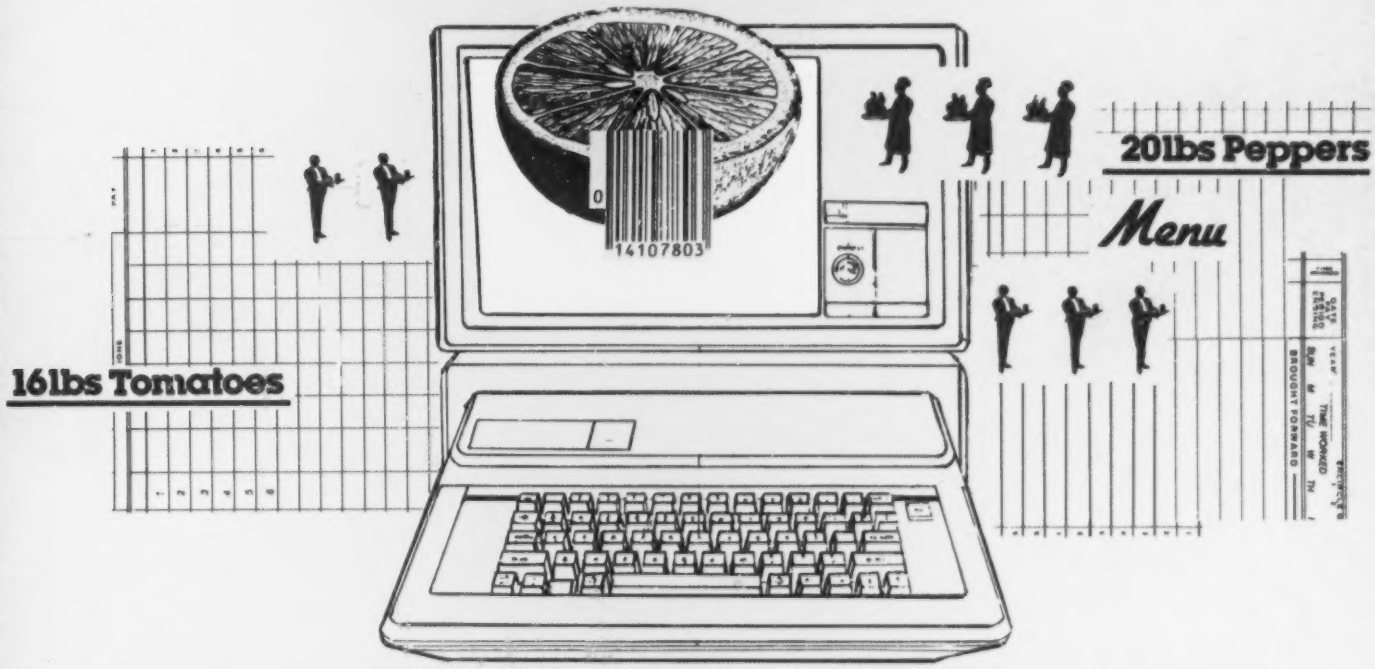

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